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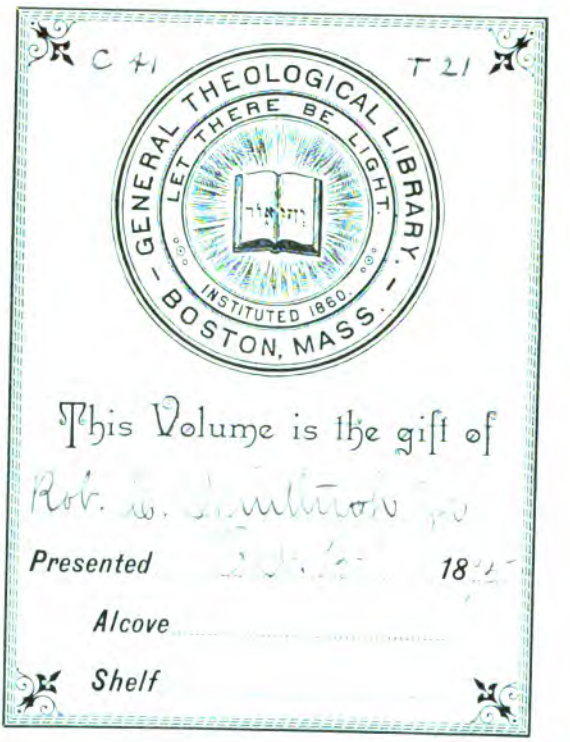

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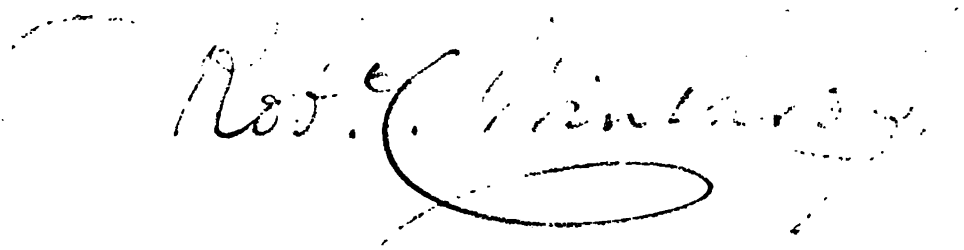

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THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

VOL. I.

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Your most affectionate friend

Jer: Taylor

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THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE:

WITH

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AN

ESSAY ON THE GENIUS AND WRITINGS

OF

JEREMY TAYLOR.

JEREMY TAYLOR forms the subject of one of the most beautiful pieces of biography in our language. We refer to Bishop Heber's life of him; a work which, for the most part, is singularly free from the vices which too often attach to that species of composition. The writer's enthusiastic admiration of his author does not blind him to a perception of his faults or imperfections; and the work, therefore, is not, what biography so often is, a tissue of indiscriminate eulogy. Its merits as a composition are of no common order; the narrative is dignified by the spirit of philosophy, and adorned and enlivened by an elegant and chastened imagination; above all, it is, for the most part, pervaded by a degree of moderation, charity, and candour, not often seen in those whose task it is to write of those eventful times, and probably inspired in no small degree by familiar converse with the lovely spirit which breathes in the immortal productions of his author.

But if the merits of that piece of biography be so great,—and no man can be more willing, or even eager, to admit them than the present writer,—some apology may be deemed necessary for the apparent presumption implied in this attempt to furnish another critical introduction to his writings. Two very sufficient reasons, however, may be assigned to justify the attempt. It seemed desirable that the present edition of Jeremy Taylor's Works should not be sent forth to the world without *some* general introduction; and it is obvious that whatsoever the merits of Bishop Heber's "Life," that work could not be prefixed to these volumes. But this is not the only reason for the present attempt. The principal object of the present Essay is distinct from that of the "Life;" what is subordinate in the one is principal in the other. Bishop Heber's object was to furnish, what had never been furnished before, an accurate, and as far as his materials would permit, a copious, account of Taylor's life, with an extensive examination of his writings. That of the present Essay is to attempt a minute analysis of his character, intellectual, moral, and religious; to which will be appended a brief critical estimate of his principal productions. It is true, indeed, that many valuable and striking observations on Jeremy Taylor's character are to be found in Bishop Heber's "Life," but with the exception of a very few pages at the close, they are, (as might be expected in a work of continuous narrative,) interwoven with the narrative itself, rendering it impossible to obtain a consistent view of Jeremy Taylor's character except by a diligent comparison of different parts of the volume. The present is an attempt to furnish a full analysis of it in a systematic form; and it is confidently hoped, that it will not be found a mere repetition of what has been already given in other shapes to the public.

But as it may be interesting to the reader, and is, in some measure, necessary for the illustration of the following pages, to give some account of the principal occurrences of his life, we shall preface

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this analysis of his character by a very brief and rapid biographical sketch. Such a sketch, unhappily, is but too easily made; for, partly from the seclusion in which a very large portion of our author's life was spent, and partly from the loss of certain family papers,* which, there is no doubt, would have thrown much light on his private history, the materials for his biography are unusually scanty; so much so indeed, that Heber has been fain to help out the narrative by incessant conjecture, and to insert here and there, apparently from the sheer want of more important matter, things of such little importance, that we are persuaded he would have rejected them could he have *afforded* to do so.

Jeremy Taylor was born at Cambridge, in 1613. His father, Nathaniel Taylor, was a barber, an employment, it must be confessed, sufficiently humble, even though, as Bishop Heber remarks, it was in those days generally united with "pharmacy and surgery." The "pharmacy and the surgery" which were practised in conjunction with such a trade were, we need not say, of very unpretending character. There can be no doubt, however, that the trade of a barber, now utterly dissociated from those mysterious crafts which once served to maintain it in a sort of questionable dignity, is invested with far more degrading associations than it was in the days of Jeremy Taylor.

But humble as his immediate parentage was, his ancestry appears to have been in a high degree respectable. Bishop Heber, with the natural enthusiasm of a biographer, exults to find that Jeremy Taylor "had some pretensions to gentle blood;" that his family "held a respectable rank amongst the smaller gentry of Gloucestershire," where they had possessed an estate for many generations; and that "Jeremy Taylor was a lineal descendant of Rowland Taylor, the martyr." Into these matters we shall not enter. If Jeremy Taylor's family had been, for untold generations, as obscure and as mean as any of those names in which the proudest pedigrees of Europe all originate, it could make not the slightest difference to his reputation; his light was his own, not reflected; he was destined to shed on his name a lustre, which outshines all the blaze of heraldry. He was one of the few who can afford to dispense with adventitious rank, for he belonged to the aristocracy of genius.

Of his early years little or nothing is known. It is reported indeed, but on insufficient evidence, that at *three* years of age he was sent to the grammar school at Cambridge. This report is at variance with his own declaration, that he was "solely grounded in grammar and mathematics by his father." Precocious as Jeremy Taylor's genius undoubtedly was, it is altogether unlikely that he was sent to a grammar school when a mere infant; and moderate as his father's attainments probably were, he might know quite enough, both of "grammar and mathematics," to perplex the mind of a child of more than three years of age.

On the 18th of August, 1626, he was admitted, as a sizar, at Caius college. He was then only in his thirteenth year.

Of his life at college,—of his habits as a student,—of the nature of his favourite pursuits, nothing is known beyond what his writings (and that indeed is sufficient) afford us. They furnish abundant evidence that he must have been then, as well as throughout life, indefatigably diligent, and that he left few departments of knowledge unexplored. Whether any emoluments or distinctions rewarded his unquestionable attainments, is disputed. His friend, Bishop Rust, affirms that after taking his degree of Bachelor of Arts, in 1630, he was honoured with a fellowship in Caius college. But the records of the university afford no evidence of this fact.

But, whether the university appreciated his genius and rewarded his industry or not, he was now to appear on the theatre best adapted to his peculiar talents, and where they were sure to attract notice and applause. A fellow-student of his, named Risden, was at this time a lecturer at St. Paul's cathedral, and having occasion to seek a substitute for a short time, he fixed on Taylor, then only in his twentieth year. His fine person, his attractive manner, his brilliant imagination, the rich and varied beauties of his style, and, as Bishop Heber plausibly conjectures, his youth, all tended to awaken the admiration of his audience. A recommendation to the attention of Laud, then just elevated to the primacy of Canterbury, was the almost immediate consequence. The archbishop desired Taylor to preach before him at Lambeth, when he was fortunate enough to obtain the ap-

* For an interesting account of these papers and their provoking loss, see Heber's "Life" of Taylor, pp. ii. iii. iv.

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probation of his new patron; who, however, objected to so "young a preacher remaining in London." Taylor begged "his Grace to pardon that *fault*," adding, "that if he lived, he would amend it." But Laud, with a judgment which it had been well for himself if he had more frequently displayed, "thought it for the advantage of the world that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement than a course of constant preaching would allow of;" * and, therefore, placed him at All-Souls college, in Oxford, of which university Laud himself was chancellor. The precise period at which this event occurred, and how long Taylor remained in London before Laud patronized him, are unknown. It is certain, however, that Taylor was not admitted Master of Arts in Oxford till 1635, or when he was about twenty-two years of age. Immediately after this, Archbishop Laud wrote a strong recommendatory letter to the warden and fellows of All-Souls, nominating him at the same time to a vacant fellowship. The recommendation of the archbishop, however, was not instantly complied with, as there were doubts whether Taylor was of such a standing at the university, as the statutes require in every candidate for a fellowship. Though, therefore, a large majority of the fellows voted in Taylor's favour, the warden, Sheldon, refused to ratify the choice. No election consequently took place; but the nomination devolving in due course on the archbishop, he appointed Taylor on his own authority. This appears to be the most correct account of an affair, which, according to Bishop Heber, Wood, in his "Athenæ Oxonienses," has much misrepresented.

There can be little doubt that a mind like that of Taylor, to whom the acquisition of knowledge was perpetual delight, profited largely by the opportunities which leisure and books, studious retirement and learned society, so plentifully afforded. There was no fear lest a fellowship should seduce *him* into indolence.

Taylor, however, was by no means a regular resident at the college. This was partly owing to his having been appointed one of Laud's chaplains,—an appointment the precise date of which is unknown; and partly to his obtaining in the year 1637-8, the rectory of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire, by the presentation of Juxon, bishop of London. The duties these involved of course necessitated an almost total absence from the university.

Certain peculiarities of his religious character, and the esteem of Laud, a man whose friendship was often almost as dangerous as his enmity, served to fix on Taylor about this period the suspicion of a tendency to Romanism; a suspicion, however, which appears to have been utterly unfounded, and which, at all events, his sermon on the Gunpowder Plot, in November 1638, completely dissipated.

If he *had* any secret love for the church of Rome, he was about to give a very equivocal proof of it, by entering on matrimony. This event occurred in 1639, in his twenty-sixth year; it, of course, involved an abandonment of his fellowship. His wife's name was Phœbe Langsdale. Her brother, a physician at Gainsborough, afterwards at Leeds, died in 1683. Of the rest of the family nothing is known. By this lady he had three sons. One of them died quite an infant, at Uppingham, in 1642. Not long after this, Taylor lost his wife. The two remaining children reached manhood, but died before their father, and both unhappily; the elder under such circumstances as must almost have "brought down his father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

At the breaking out of the civil war, Taylor immediately repaired to Oxford, to join the king; and soon after, "by his majesty's command," published his work on "Episcopacy." In the same year was conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity; a distinction, however, which the king, now somewhat straitened in such commodities of honour, conferred on his loyal adherents with so prodigal a hand as to render them of questionable value. Doctors of Divinity at length threatened to become so cheap that the university were provoked to remonstrate with the king on his extraordinary profusion. Had all who received this honour been as worthy of it as Jeremy Taylor, none would have quarrelled with the royal liberality.

But this honour was no compensation for the loss of the rectory of Uppingham, which the presbyterians, now rapidly gaining strength, sequestrated. The exact period of this sequestration is not known.

In Christopher Hatton, afterwards Lord Hatton of Kirby, Taylor found a friend and patron in the days of adversity; and to this nobleman his defence of "Episcopacy," and several of his early works, are dedicated. Though far from deserving all the flattery to which Taylor treats him, (partly under

* Archbishop Rust's Funeral Sermon for Taylor, inserted in this volume.

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the combined influence of poverty and gratitude, partly in compliance with the base fashion of adulation which distinguished the dedications of the day,*) Hatton must have been a man of considerable worth, learning, and ability.

Taylor's history during the rest of the civil war is involved in the deepest obscurity. Wood tells us that he followed the king's army as chaplain, and that he often preached before the court at Oxford. But one of his letters, the original of which is still extant in the British Museum, shows that during, at all events, a *part* of the year 1643, he was residing with his mother-in-law. Some expressions in it seem to betray the fact that Taylor was already involved in those pecuniary embarrassments, from which he was at few periods of his life perfectly exempt.

His residence with his mother-in-law could have been but temporary, for the following year he is found in Wales, whither, as Bishop Heber conjectures, he had retired after his second marriage. Here circumstances again brought him into connexion with part of the royal army. In such ill-omened company even the mountain solitudes of Wales could afford him no protection. In the victory gained by the parliamentary forces over Colonel Gerard, near Cardigan Castle, Taylor was taken prisoner; at least none will feel the slightest doubt that he is the "Dr. Taylor" whom Whitelocke mentions as taken on this occasion. Some light is thrown on this portion of his history by Jeremy Taylor himself in the dedication to his "Liberty of Prophesying." But though the passage fully shows that Jeremy Taylor had been exposed to *some such* calamity as that above mentioned, he has so completely disguised the narrative under the form of allegory, that it is impossible to tell, from his excessively figurative language, what the precise facts of the case were. The passage is, indeed, so beautiful in itself, and so eminently characteristic of the writer, that we cannot refrain from transcribing it. Nor is the close of it, in which he makes honourable mention of the "gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy," the least worthy of notice. It is delightful to reflect that as, in that ferocious struggle, there were men who were capable of performing such kind offices to their foes, so there were others who, like Taylor, could gratefully record them.

"My Lord,

"In this great storm, which hath dashed the vessel of the church all in pieces, I have been cast upon the coast of Wales, and, in a little boat, thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness, which, in England, in a greater, I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor, and thinking to ride safely, the storm followed me with so impetuous violence, that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor; and here again I was exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons. And but that he who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people, had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content or study. But I know not whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy: Οἱ γὰρ βάρβαροι παρεῖχον οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν φιλανθρωπίαν ἡμῖν· ἀνάψαντες γὰρ πυρὰν, προσελάβοντο πάντας ἡμᾶς, διὰ τὸν ὑετὸν τὸν ἐφεστῶτα, καὶ διὰ τὸ ψύχος. And now since I have come ashore, I have been gathering a few sticks to warm me, a few books to entertain my thoughts, and divert them from the perpetual meditation of my private troubles and the public dyscrasy: but those which I could obtain were so few, and so impertinent, and unuseful to any great purposes, that I began to be sad upon a new stock, and full of apprehension that I should live unprofitably, and die obscurely, and be forgotten, and my bones thrown into some common charnel-house, without any name or note to distinguish me from those who only served their generation by filling the number of citizens, and who could pretend to no thanks or reward from the public, beyond 'jus trium liberorum.'"

What was the term of Taylor's imprisonment, and by whose kindness he obtained his freedom, it is impossible to ascertain. Neither is it known where he betook himself immediately after his release. It is, however, highly improbable that he would rejoin the king's army, the condition of which was fast becoming desperate. Indeed, it is probable that the very terms on which he was set at large, were such as precluded the possibility of his again attaching himself to the royal camp.

Being now thrown entirely on his own resources, he did what Milton and many other great men of the age were compelled to do—he kept a school. He did not, however, venture on this drudgery alone; William Nicholson, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, and William Wyatt, afterwards pre-

* Gross as some of Taylor's flattery is, it is nothing compared with the fulsome stuff to be found in some of the dedications of South, a man many of whose peculiarities would have appeared to render flattery impossible. But experience shows us that insolence and meanness are not unfrequently near neighbours.—It is to be observed as an apology for Taylor, that his boundless charity, the warmth and the kindness of his nature, his gratitude, not to say his profound humility, would often induce him most sincerely to overrate the merits of others; but from such a man as South—so cold—so sarcastic—so cynical—gross flatteries can be considered as little better than deliberate lies.

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bendary of Lincoln, were associated with him. Newton Hall, a house in the parish of Lanfihangel, was the scene of their labours, and it is said, that, all things considered, their success more than equalled their expectations. How long this triumvirate of schoolmasters existed is not known; not more than a very few years at most. While this connexion continued, appeared "A new and easy Institution of Grammar," which has been ascribed by some to Taylor himself, by some to Wyatt; by others, with greater probability, it is supposed to have been a joint work. The dedication, however, which is inscribed to the eldest son of Hatton, is all Taylor's. "An easy Institution of Grammar," by Jeremy Taylor, reminds one of the little tracts of his great contemporary Milton, entitled, "Accedence commenced Grammar," and "Artis Logicæ Institutio."

But this humble effort was soon after followed by his celebrated work, "The Liberty of Prophesying;" a work which though not read so much as most of his devotional and practical writings, has probably conferred upon him more reputation, and has certainly entitled him to the gratitude of all posterity. As this work, together with the other principal pieces of Taylor, will be characterized at the close of this Essay, we are absolved for the present from the necessity of saying any thing of its merits. Its general object, it is well known, is to establish within certain limits, what was then little understood, and scarcely in a single instance practised,—the doctrine of toleration.

That such a work, in such an age, should pass unquestioned and uncontroverted, was not to be expected. Of the many who attacked the principles it defended, the only one whose name has blessed the ears of posterity was Samuel Rutherford, professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrews. His reply was entitled, "A free Disputation against pretended Liberty of Conscience," and is not a whit behind Edwards's "Gangrœna" in blind bigotry and intolerance. His name is contemptuously referred to by Milton in his sarcastic lines entitled, "On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament." Bishop Heber affirms that Milton was always reputed to have been an admirer of Taylor; there can be little doubt that he was so, though on what authority Bishop Heber affirms the fact, the present writer knows not. There is great probability, however, in his conjecture that Milton in the following lines of the poem above referred to, had an eye to his illustrious contemporary, whose sentiments on the subject of toleration so exactly coincided with his own:

> "Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
> Would have been held in high esteem by Paul,
> Must now be named and branded heretics,
> By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call."

The name of Jeremy Taylor's second wife (whom Bishop Heber supposes him to have married before his imprisonment in Wales, and to whom, it is tolerably certain, he must have been married before his "Liberty of Prophesying" appeared) was Joanna Bridges; she was possessed of some property at Mandinam, at Llanguedor, in the county of Caermarthen. Little of her history is known, and of her family nothing. According to current report, however, she was a natural daughter of Charles the First, born while he was Prince of Wales. Her portrait, still preserved, proves that she must have possessed no ordinary beauty, and her features, it is said, bore a singular resemblance to those of her supposed father.

Whether "the Mandinam property," as her estate is called in the family papers, was small, or that Taylor's release from captivity after the defeat of the royalists at Cardigan was effected with the loss of considerable part of it, is not known; but it is certain that it was not sufficient to exempt him from the necessity of literary exertion, or of availing himself of the liberality of his friends.

His most generous patron, at this period of his life, and for several years after, was Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, a man of considerable note in his day; a cavalier, but not one of the most violent. Throughout the whole struggle, he was on friendly terms with many of the victorious party; and was consequently allowed, after the defeat at Marston Moor, to compound for his estates under very advantageous circumstances. His seat was at Golden Grove, in the parish of Llanguedor. In this family Taylor found, for some years, the most generous protection and support, which he has repaid by giving them immortality in his writings. He officiated as their chaplain; to them, and their immediate neighbourhood, he preached his ενιαυτος of "sermons;" while he has honoured, with separate dedications in his "Great Exemplar," the two wives of his patron, the Ladies Frances

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and Alice Carbery, the first of whom, if we may take her estimate by Taylor's gratitude, must have been a person of almost superhuman worth. The second was the celebrated heroine of "Milton's Comus."

The "Life of Christ" was the next in the order of his publications. This work, as were all his other publications for some years, is wholly of a practical and devotional character. His other works during the above mentioned period, were; a "Funeral Sermon" for Lady Carbery; A short Catechism for Children;" his "Twenty-Seven Sermons for the Summer Half-Year;" and his "Holy Living and Dying."

In 1654, he again mingled, though doubtless with reluctance, in controversy. On this occasion, he broke his first lance with the Roman catholics, against whom he produced his excellent treatise on the "Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the blessed Sacrament."

New trials now awaited Taylor. His preface to his Manual (entitled, in compliment to his patron, "Golden Grove") contained matter, which could not fail to excite the anger of the dominant parties. Imprisonment was the consequence; though at what precise time this event occurred is uncertain. The fact is ascertained by a letter from one of his friends, in which the writer congratulates him on his restoration to freedom.

This friend was John Evelyn, Esq. of Says Court, who proved to Taylor as kind a protector and patron as the Earl of Carbery had been. The circumstances which led to their intimacy are not known. All that is certain is, that he was one of Taylor's auditors in London, in 1654; and that the acquaintance, which at that time subsisted between them, soon ripened into the most endeared friendship. Evelyn ever after regarded Taylor as his "ghostly father," while Taylor received in exchange for his "spiritual things," a liberal supply of his friend's "temporal things."

Shortly after he had formed this valuable friendship, Taylor appears, by a letter of Evelyn, to have been again imprisoned. This imprisonment was doubtless the same with that at Chepstow Castle, to which he refers in his answer to the letter of the bishop of Rochester, touching "Original Sin," appended in the present edition to his "Deus Justificatus." The cause is not known. It is certain, however, that his imprisonment was not of long duration; nor does it seem to have been of much severity. For in the letter to the bishop of Rochester, he tells his correspondent, "Your Lordship's letter, dated July 28, I received not till Sept. 11; it seems R. Royston detained it in his hands, supposing it could not come safely to me, while I remain a prisoner now in Chepstow Castle. But I now have that liberty that I can receive any letters, and send any; for the gentlemen under whose custody I am, as they are careful of their charges, so they are civil to my person."

It was under such discouraging circumstances as these, that Taylor finished his "Course of Sermons for every Sunday in the Year," and composed his "Unum Necessarium, or the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance."

This work contained those rash speculations on the subject of "Original Sin," which, in spite of his conciliatory preface to the bishops of Salisbury and Rochester and the clergy of the church of England generally, exposed him to suspicion and censure from very many in his own communion, and involved him in his unpleasant controversy with Dr. Jeanes and others. These ill-advised speculations will hereafter come more fully under review. The replies, letters, and expostulations, which these novelties in doctrine provoked against him, induced him to vindicate himself in his "Further Explication of the Doctrine of Original Sin;" and once more, in his "Deus Justificatus," or "Vindication of the Glory of the Divine Attributes in the Question of Original Sin."

The "Further Explication" was submitted, while in manuscript, to the Bishop of Rochester, for his revision and correction; but as the tract was in fact only a more elaborate defence and reiteration of doctrines deemed to be unscriptural and false, the bishop declined the task to which he was invited. The prefatory letter of Taylor to the bishop (first published in Heber's life) is well worth insertion here, as a beautiful exemplification of the spirit of humility and charity which characterized the writer. It shows that though he might reason ill, he did not cherish his error. The place from which it is dated, affords evidence that he was at this time released from confinement, and was once more at Mandinam.

"Right Reverend Father in God.

"My very good Lord,—I wrote to your Lorp. about a fortnight or three weekes since, to wh. letter, although I believe an answer is upon the road, yet I thought fitt to prevent the arrival of by this addresse; together with which

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I send up to Royston a little tract, giving a further account of that doctrine which some of my brethren were lesse pleased with. And although I find, by the letters of my friends from thence, that the storme is over, and many of the contradictors professe themselves of my opinion, and pretend that they were so before, but thought it not fit to owne it, yet I have sent up these papers, by which (according to that counsel which your Lorp. in your prudence and charity was pleased to give me) I doe intend, and I hope they will effect it,—give satisfaction to the church and to my jealous brethren: besides, possibly, they may prevent a trouble to me, if peradventure any man should be *tam otiose negotiosus* as to write against me. For I am very desirous to be permitted quietly to my studies, that I may seasonably publish the first three books of my Cases of Conscience, which I am now preparing to the presse, and by which, as I hope to serve God and the church, so I doe designe to doe some honour to your Lorp., to whose charity and noblenesse I and my relatives are so much obliged. I have given order to Royston to consigne these papers into your Lorp.'s hands, to peruse, censure, acquit, or condemne, as your Lorp. pleases. If the written copy be too troublesome to read, your Lorp. may receive them from the presse, and yet suppresse them before the publication, *si minus probentur*. But if, by your Lorp.'s letters, which I suppose are coming to mee, I find any permission or counsel from your Lorp. that may cause me to alter or adde to what is sent up, I will obey it, and give Royston order not to post so fast, but that I may overtake him before these come abroad. But I was upon any termes willing to be quit of these, that I might no longer suffer or looke upon any thing that may retard my more beloved intendment.

"My Lord, I humbly begge your blessing upon

"Your Lorp.'s most obliged and most affectionate and thankful Servant,

"Mandinam, November 17, 1655." "JER. TAYLOR."

About this time Evelyn strongly urged Taylor to write some work for the private use of those who, in those unsettled times, were deprived of the usual privileges of public ordinances and a regular ministry. This application drew from Taylor the following beautiful letter, first published in Bishop Heber's memoir of him.

TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

St. Paul's Convers. $5\frac{5}{7}$.

"Deare Sr,—I perceive by your symptoms how the spirits of pious men are affected in this sad catalysis: it is an evil time, and we ought not to hold our peace; but now the question is, Who shall speake? Yet I am highly persuaded, that, to good men and wise, a persecution is nothing but a changing the circumstance of religion, and the manner of the formes and appendages of divine worship. Publike or private is all one: the first hath the advantage of society, the second of love. There is a warmth and light in that; there is a heate and zeale in this; and if every person that can, will but consider concerning the essentials of religion, and retaine them severelly, and immure them as well as he can with the same or equivalent ceremonies, I know no difference in the thing, but that he shall have the exercise, and, consequently, the reward of other graces, for which, if he lives and dies in prosperous dayes, he shall never be crowned. But the evills are, that some will be tempted to quit their present religion, and some to take a worse, and some to take none at all. It is a true and a sad story; but *oportet esse hæreses*, for so they that are faithful shall be knowne; and I am sure He that hath promised to bring good out of evil, and that all things shall cooperate to the good of them that feare God, will verify it concerning persecution. But concerning a discourse upon the present state of things in relation to soules and our present duty, I agree with you that it is very fitt it were done, but yet by somebody who is in London, and sees the personal necessities and circumstances of pious people. Yet I was so far persuaded to do it myselfe, that I had amassed together divers of my papers useful to the worke; but my Cases of Conscience call upon me so earnestly, that I find myselfe not able to beare the cries of a clamorous conference. Sr, I thank you for imparting to me the vile distich of the dear departed saint. I value it as I doe the picture of deformity or a devil; the art may be good, and the gift faire, though the thing be intolerable; but I remember that when the Jesuits, sneering and deriding our calamity, shewed this sarcasme to my lord Lucas, Birkenhead being present, replied as tartly, 'It is true our church wants a head now; but if you have charity as you pretend, you can lend us one, for your church has had two and three at a time.' Sr, I knowe not when I shall be able to come to London; for our being stripped of the little reliques of our fortune remaining after ye shipwrecke, leaves not cordage nor sailes sufficient to beare me thither. But I hope to be able to commit to the presse my first bookes of Conscience by Easter time; and then, if I be able to get up, I shall be glad to wayte upon you; of whose good I am not more sollicitous than I am joyful that you so carefully provide for it in your best interest. I shall only give you the same prayer and blessing that St. John gave to Gaius; 'Beloved, I wish that you may be in health and prosper;' and your soule prospers; for so, by the rules of the best rhetorike, the greatest affaire is put into a parenthesis, and the biggest businesse into a postscript. Sr, I thanke you for your kind expressions at the latter end of your letter: you have never troubled mee, neither can I pretend to any other returne from you but that of your love and prayers. In all things else I doe but my duty, and I hope God and you will accept it; and that, by means of his own procurement, he will, some way or other (but how I know not yet) make provisions for mee. Sr, I am, in all heartinesse of affection,

"Your most affectionate friend and minister in the Lord Jesus,

"JER. TAYLOR."

A few months after this, we find Taylor in London, paying a delightful visit to Evelyn, at Saye's Court, where he met Berkeley, Boyle, and Wilkins. In the following beautiful and truly christian letter, he refers to the high gratification he had enjoyed in such society.

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"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"April 16, 1656.

"HONOUR'D AND DEARE Sr,—I hope your servant brought my apology with him, and that I already am pardoned, or excused in your thoughts, that I did not returne an answer yesterday to your friendly letter. Sr, I did believe myselfe so very much bounde to you for your so kind, so friendly reception of mee in your *Tusculanum*, that I had some little wonder upon mee when I saw you making excuses that it was no better. Sr, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heape and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of the prettinesse of your aboad, or so low an opinion of your prudence and piety, as to thinke you can be any wayes transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month's possession; and that strangers, and seldome seers, feele the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and the cleannesse of all your outward things; and look upon you not onely as a person, by way of thankfulnesse to God for his mercies and goodnesse to you, specially obliged to a great measure of piety, but also as one who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can, without excuse and allay, wholly intend what you so passionately desire, the service of God. But, now I am considering yours, and enumerating my owne pleasures, I cannot but adde that, though I could not choose but be delighted by seeing all about you, yet my delices were really in seeing you severe and unconcerned in these things, and now in finding your affections wholly a stranger to them, and to communicate with them no portion of your passion but such as is necessary to him that uses them or receives their ministries. Sr, I long truly to converse with you; for I doe not doubt but in those liberties we shall both goe bettered from each other. For your *Lucretius*, I perceive you have suffered the importunity of too kind friends to prevaile with you. I will not say to you that your *Lucretius* is as far distant from the severity of a christian as the faire Ethiopian was from the duty of Bp. Heliodorus; for indeede it is nothing but what may become the labours of a christian gentleman, those things onely abated which our evil age needes not; for which also I hope you either have by notes, or will by preface prepare a sufficient antidote: But since you are ingag'd in it, doe not neglect to adorne it, and take what care of it it can require or neede; for that neglect will be a reproofe of your own act, and looke as if you did it with an unsatisfied mind, and then you may make that to be wholly a sin, from which onely by prudence and charity you could before be advised to abstain. But, Sr, if you will give me leave, I will impose such a penance upon you for your publication of Lucretius, as shall neither displease God nor you; and since you are buisy in that which may minister directly to learning, and indirectly to error or the confidences of men, who of themselves are apt enough to hide their vices in irreligion, I know you will be willing, and will suffer your selfe to be intreated, to imploy the same pen in the glorifications of God, and the ministeries of eucharist and prayer. Sr, if you have Mr. *Silhon de l' Immortalité de l' Ame*, I desire you to lend it mee for a weeke; and believe that I am in great heartiness and dearenesse of affection,

"DEARE Sr,

"Your obliged and most affectionate friend and servant,

"JER. TAYLOR."

About this period, he published his "Deus Justificatus; or, a Vindication of the Glory of the Divine Attributes in the Question of Original Sin." In the same year appeared a "Treatise on Artificial Handsomeness," which was, at one time, generally attributed to Taylor, and which many of his admirers still believe to be his. It appears to the writer of this Essay, that Bishop Heber has satisfactorily demonstrated this supposition to be erroneous. The internal evidence even of the style (though it sometimes unquestionably reminds the reader of Taylor's peculiarities) is, on the whole, against such an hypothesis: but a far more conclusive refutation of it is furnished by the nature of many of the sentiments, or rather by the whole strain of argument, the tract is designed to support. It contradicts Taylor's known and recorded opinions. The tract in question is an elaborate defence of artificial beauty; and those who have read attentively Taylor's "Holy Living," and his "Great Exemplar," will not need to be told that he was not likely to prostitute his genius in the advocacy of any such absurdities.

In the latter part of the same year, Taylor was visited with a severe domestic calamity. He suddenly lost two of the three "hopeful" boys which were the fruit of his second marriage. The following letter, a copy of which is in the British Museum, contains a touching reference to this sad bereavement. It is not known to whom it was addressed.

"DEARE SIR,—I know you will either excuse or acquit, or at least pardon mee that I have so long seemingly neglected to make a returne to your so kind and friendly letter; when I shall tell you that I have passed through a great cloud which hath wetted mee deeper than the skin. It hath pleased God to send the small poxe and feavers among my children; and I have, since I received your last, buried two sweet, hopeful boyes; and have now but one sonne left, whom I intend, if it please God, to bring up to London before Easter, and then I hope to waite upon you, and by your sweet conversation and other divertisements, if not to alleviate my sorrow, yet, at least, to entertain myself and keep me from too intense and actual thinkings of my trouble. Dear Sr, will you doe so much for mee as to beg my pardon of Mr. Thurland, that I have yet made no returne to him for his so friendly letter and expressions. Sr, you see there

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is too much matter to make excuse; my sorrow will, at least, render me an object of every good man's pity and commiseration. But, for myself, I bless God, I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported, I am sure, highly pleased, with thinking how infinitely sweet his mercies are when his judgments are so gracious. Sr, there are many particulars in your letter which I would faine have answered; but, still, my little sadnesses intervene, and will yet suffer me to write nothing else: but that I beg your prayers, and that you will still own me to be,

"DEARE AND HONOURED SIR,

"Your very affectionate friend and hearty servant,

"Feb. 22, 165⅘." "JER. TAYLOR."

Shortly after this melancholy event, and probably in consequence of it, he is said to have left Golden Grove for a considerable time, and to have repaired to London; it is also said that he there officiated to a small congregation of episcopalians. This is Wood's representation. On this point, however, there is great doubt. Bishop Heber thinks that, in all probability, his visits to the metropolis were merely occasional, and that he never permanently resided there.

In 1657, his pecuniary perplexities were most generously relieved by the grant of a yearly pension from Evelyn. Taylor's short letter in reply to it, is characteristic of the warmth and ardour of his affections.

"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"HONOUR'D AND DEARE SIR,—A stranger came two nights since from you with a letter, and a token; full of humanity and sweetnesse that was, and this of charity. I know it is more blessed to give than to receive; and yet as I no ways repine at the Providence that forces me to receive, so neither can I envy that felicity of yours, not onely that you can, but that you doe give; and as I rejoyce in that mercy which daily makes decrees in heaven for my support and comfort, soe I doe most thankfully adore the goodnesse of God to you, whom he consignes to greater glories by the ministeries of these graces. But, Sir, what am I, or what can I doe, or what have I done, that you thinke I have or can oblige you? Sir, you are too kinde to mee; and oblige me not onely beyond my merit, but beyond my modesty. I onely can love you, and honour you, and pray for you: and in all this I cannot say but that I am behind hand with you, for I have found so great effluxes of all your worthinesse and charities, that I am a debtor for your prayers, for the comfort of your letters, for the charity of your hand, and the affections of your heart. Sir, though you are beyond the reach of my returnes, and my services are very short of touching you, yet if it were possible for me to receive any commands, the obeying of which might signify my great regards of you, I could with some more confidence converse with a person so obliging; but I am oblig'd and asham'd, and unable to say so much as I should doe to represent myselfe to be,

"HONOUR'D AND DEARE SIR,

"Your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

"May 15, 1657." "JER. TAYLOR."

This same year, Taylor republished several of his pieces, controversial and practical, in one volume folio, under the title Σύμβολον Ηθικο-πολεμικον. The "Liberty of Prophesying," in this edition, contained some few additions, while the volume was enriched with one valuable and beautiful little tract, never before published, the "Discourse of Friendship."

Early in the year 1658, Taylor was once more in London, though in no enviable lodgings;—the Tower! It appears that his publisher had prefixed to his "Collection of Offices," a picture of Christ in the attitude of prayer! By an act recently passed, all such "effigies" were declared "scandalous," and "tending to idolatry," and as, in those strange times, there was often as much injustice in the execution of the laws as in the laws themselves, Taylor had to pay for his bookseller's indiscretion. By the good offices, however, of his never-failing friend, Evelyn, he was soon set at liberty.

Evelyn, shortly after this, lost two sons—Richard and George Taylor, at all times well qualified to administer consolation, was in this case peculiarly fitted for this office. He could the more deeply sympathize with his friend's sorrows, that he had so recently been called to drink the same bitter cup even to the dregs. The following is the eminently beautiful letter of condolence which he addressed to Evelyn on this occasion, and which we make no apology for transcribing entire.

"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"DEARE SIR,—If dividing and sharing griefes were like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you would find your streame much abated; for I account myselfe to have a great cause of sorrow, not onely in the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes, but in the loose of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all

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my owne sorrowes without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadnesse in your losse are so just and so reasonable, that I can no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourne; so certaine it is that griefe does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch, and by joining mine to yours, I doe but encrease the flame. 'Hoc me malè urit,' is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But, Sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart; and if I can but remove the darke side of the lanthorne, you have enoughe within you to warme yourselfe, and to shine to others. Remember, Sir, your two boyes are two bright starres, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them agayne. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy termes; nothing but to be borne and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable griefe; and, indeed, though the griefe hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no loosers, but you are the person that complaines, doe but consider what you would have suffer'd for their interest: you would have suffered them to goe from you, to be great princes in a strange country: and if you can be content to suffer your owne inconvenience for their interest, you command [commend] your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. But you have said and done well, when you looke upon it as a rod of God; and he that so smites here will spare hereafter: and if you, by patience and submission, imprint the discipline upon your own flesh, you kill the cause, and make the effect very tolerable; because it is, in some sense, chosen, and therefore, in no sense, insufferable. Sir, if you doe not looke to it, time will snatch your honour from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by christian philosophy which time will doe alone. And if you consider, that of the bravest men in the world, we find the seldomest stories of their children, and the apostles had none, and thousands of the worthiest persons, that sound most in story, died childlesse: you will find it is a rare act of Providence so to impose upon worthy men a necessity of perpetuating their names by worthy actions and discourses, governments and reasonings. If the breach be never repair'd, it is because God does not see it fitt to be; and if you will be of his mind, it will be much the better. But, Sir, you will pardon my zeale and passion for your comfort, I will readily confesse that you have no need of any discourse from me to comfort you. Sir, now you have an opportunity of serving God by passive graces; strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel and comfort, stand in the breaches of your owne family, and make it appeare that you are more to her than ten sons. Sir, by the assistance of Almighty God, I purpose to wait on you some time next weeke, that I may be a witnesse of your christian courage and bravery; and that I may see, that God never displeases you, as long as the main stake is preserved, I meane your hopes and confidences of heaven. Sir, I shall pray for all that you can want, that is, some degrees of comfort and a present mind; and shal alwayes doe you honour, and faine also would doe you service, if it were in the power, as it is in the affections and desires of,

"DEAR SIR,

"Your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

"Feb. 17, 1657-8. "JER. TAYLOR."

The friends of Taylor, probably prompted as much by fears for his safety as by compassion for his poverty, now suggested an expedient for securing the one and relieving the other; an expedient which, as Heber properly remarks, would, under any other circumstances, have excited the utmost astonishment. They proposed to banish him to a sort of Patmos,—out of the way of further persecution,—to the north-eastern part of barbarous Ireland! The proposal originated with the Earl of Conway, who had immense possessions in the neighbourhood of Lisburne. It was this nobleman, in all likelihood, who procured for Taylor that offer of an alternate lectureship at Lisburne, which, as appears by the following extract from a letter of Taylor to Evelyn, in reply to the proposal, excited no very pleasant sensations.

"HONOUR'D SIR,—I returne you many thankes for your care of my temporal affaires: I wish I may be able to give you as good account of my watchfulnesse for your service, as you have of your diligence to doe me benefit. But concerning the thing itselfe, I am to give you this account. I like not the condition of being a lecturer under the dispose of another, nor to serve in my semi-circle, where a presbyterian and myselfe shall be like Castor and Pollux, the one up and the other downe; which, methinkes, is like the worshipping the sun, and making him the deity, that we may be religious halfe the yeare, and every night serve another interest. Sir, the stipend is so inconsiderable, it will not pay the charge and trouble of remooving my selfe and family. It is wholly arbitrary; for the triers may overthrow it; or the vicar may forbid it; or the subscribers may die, or grow weary, or poore, or be absent. I beseech you, Sir, pay my thankes to your friend, who had so much kindnesse for mee as to intend my benefitt: I thinke myselfe no lesse obliged to him and you than if I had accepted it." * * * * * *

Yielding, however, to the dictates of prudence and the importunities of friendship, and cheered by the prospects of comfort which, he was assured, awaited him, he at length quietly resigned himself to this sentence of exile from all he most cherished.

He proceeded to his destination with the strongest letters of recommendation from Sir Wm. Petty and other persons of distinction. The persons to whom those letters were addressed were of equal distinction; amongst the rest, the lord chancellor of Ireland; the Lord Pepys; General Tomlinson;

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the lord chief baron. Above all, Cromwell himself, either because he respected and admired the man, or because he was not unwilling that so stanch a loyalist should be removed from England, or more probably from both these motives, "gave him a passport and protection for himself and family under his sign manual and privy signet."

He sailed from England in June. In Ireland, he is said to have lived alternately at Lisburne and Portmore, which places were about eight miles from each other. It is conjectured, that he might have visited Lisburne merely to discharge his public functions; for, if we may trust the tradition of the family, he almost constantly resided in a house near the mansion of the Earl of Conway. He did not quite restrict the exercise of his ministerial functions to his lectureship; he is said to have sometimes addressed a little assembly of loyalists "in the half-ruined church of Kilulta."

The spot in which Taylor now lived must have been exactly suited to all the native tastes and dispositions of his mind. The noble mansion of his patron stood amidst scenes of romantic beauty; diversified with wood and water, hill and dale. Two lakes, Lough Neagh and Lough Bag, one larger, the other smaller, both of them decked with fairy islands, watered these princely domains. In these retreats, more especially Ram Island on Lough Neagh and a still smaller islet on the lesser lake, Jeremy Taylor, who here found all that could gratify his fancy or feed his passion for contemplation and retirement, frequently buried himself. "Poor and dependent as Taylor was," to adopt a natural and just reflection of his biographer, "this was probably the happiest part of his life."

His letters from this obscure, yet delightful retreat, are just such as might be expected from a literary man under such circumstances. He was still anxious to know what was occurring in that intellectual world, for a total seclusion from which even the most enchanting scenery of nature could hardly compensate. A single paragraph from his first letter to Evelyn will amuse the reader.

"HONOURED SIR,—I feare I am so unfortunate as that I forgot to leave with you a direction how you might, if you pleased to honour me with a letter, refresh my solitude with notice of your health and that of your relatives, that I may rejoyce and give God thankes for the blessing and prosperity of my dearest and most honour'd friends. I have kept close all the winter, that I might, without interruption, attend to the finishing of the imployment I was engaged in: which now will have no longer delay than what it meetes in the printer's hands. But, Sir, I hope that by this time you have finished what you have so prosperously begun,—your owne Lucretius. I desire to receive notice of it from yourselfe, and what other designes you are upon in order to the promoting or adorning learning; for I am confident you will be as useful and profitable as you can be, that, by the worthiest testimonies, it may by posterity be remembered that you did live. But, Sir, I pray say to me something concerning the state of learning; how is any art or science likely to improove? what good bookes are lately publike? what learned men, abroad or at home, begin anew to fill the mouth of fame, in the places of the dead Salmasius, Vossius, Mocelin, Sirmond, Rigaltius, Des Cartes, Galileo, Peiresk, Petavius, and the excellent persons of yesterday?" * * * * * *

Taylor had not been long at Portmore before he found that nothing short of absolute solitude is a protection against calumny. A person named "Tandy," whose precise relations to Taylor's new patrons it is not very easy to ascertain, but who on some account was meanly jealous of Taylor's reputation, "denounced him to the Irish privy council as a dangerous and disaffected character."

Though the Earl of Conway took up the cause of his *protegè* with becoming spirit, Taylor was summoned before the council to answer to the accusations preferred against him. He was, in all probability, soon discharged; yet his journey to Dublin, undertaken in the midst of winter, occasioned a severe indisposition.

In his letters to Evelyn at the close of 1659, and the beginning of 1660, he declares his intention of visiting London in the coming April. This purpose he accomplished at a moment most opportune for his future advancement. He arrived in the metropolis in time to affix his name to the celebrated declaration of the loyalists, dated April 24, 1660, expressive "of their confidence in Monk and his government." This was a favourable introduction to the attention of the young monarch; to whom moreover he did not neglect to dedicate* his great work, then just completed, the "Ductor Dubitantium." In the same year appeared the "Worthy Communicant," to which was attached his funeral sermon for Sir George Dalstone.

The king must have been even more base and ungrateful than he afterwards proved to be, had he wholly overlooked the merits of such a man as Jeremy Taylor. He was accordingly nominated,

* This dedication, by the way, considering all the circumstances of this case, is by no means so adulatory as some of his other dedications.

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on the 6th of August, to the bishopric of Down and Connor; and though he might naturally have expected a more splendid reward, in that distribution of the "good things" which the restored monarch had to bestow, his attachment to Ireland,—his adopted country, his refuge in poverty and trouble, and by this time sanctified by so many delightful associations,—doubtless reconciled him to this appointment. Shortly after his elevation to the episcopate, he was elected, at the instance of the Duke of Ormond, vice chancellor of the university of Dublin.

The duties which these situations imposed were exceedingly arduous. But Jeremy Taylor was no idler, and he therefore set about the discharge of them with vigour and perseverance. The affairs of the university, which had gone into sad confusion and disorder, he subjected to a complete revision, not only correcting many abuses, but digesting a complete body of statutes and regulations. This task, though heavy, was performed satisfactorily enough.

Though Bishop Taylor laboured with equal or even with greater diligence in the duties of his diocess, it is not to be wondered at that those labours were only partially successful. In that imbittered state of feeling, with which the different classes of religionists regarded one another, the character of a Jeremy Taylor on the one side or of a Howe on the other, could do comparatively little. The "odium theologicum" is always strong enough, even where nothing but controversy has inflamed it; but where, as in this case, the animosity of contending sects was aggravated by a long and ferocious civil conflict and by the remembrance of ten thousand mutual wrongs, hardly angelic virtue could have secured any man of any party from the suspicion and the hatred of the rest.

Whatever opinions may be formed of the ecclesiastical system of which Jeremy Taylor formed so great an ornament, and which was now restored, none who have studied his character and his writings can doubt, that he discharged what he deemed his duties, though with zeal and diligence, yet in the spirit of a christian,—with mildness, with gentleness, with charity. This his history tells us; but even if it did not, his character alone would be authentication sufficient. Happy had it been for the church of which he was so distinguished a member, had all her dignitaries displayed the same spirit of moderation, and the same conciliatory temper!

But though Taylor's efforts in his diocess were, as might be expected, only partially successful, they did unquestionably produce in due time a powerful effect; and, indeed, while human nature remains what it is, such conduct and such a spirit as his will necessarily do more towards the real subjugation of mankind, than the utmost force of the most perfect despotism. Tyranny may be defied; but persevering kindness, how few can long resist!

Jeremy Taylor was now placed in a situation where he would be necessarily exposed to all the annoyances arising from extensive religious differences; a situation which would put his principles of toleration to a severe practical test. Under these circumstances, he has sometimes been charged with having abandoned, or, at all events, seriously qualified, some of the principles laid down in his "Liberty of Prophesying;" more especially in his "Sermon before the two Houses of Parliament," preached on the 8th of May, 1660. This charge we shall briefly examine in a subsequent part of this Essay.

The cup of honours and dignities was not yet quite full. In the following February, he was made a member of the "Irish privy council;" and in April, was commissioned to undertake, together with his own diocess, the neighbouring one of Dromore. The reason assigned in the writ under the privy seal for this appointment, was an illustrious tribute to his worth and excellence. He was chosen, it stated, "on account of his virtue, wisdom, and industry."

His "Sermon before the Parliament," his "Consecration Sermon," and a little manual for his clergy, were all that Taylor sent to the press during the first year of his episcopate; and considering his manifold labours, even these were more than could have been expected. That there were moods, in which he looked back with regret to the delights of the retirement he had lost, and in which, had it been consistent with duty, he would gladly have laid down the oppressive honours of the mitre in exchange for the studious quiet of his former life, may not only well be conceived from his passion for solitude and abstraction, but seems almost implied in the language he employs in a letter to his old friend Evelyn, written somewhat more than a year after his installation. It is dated Dublin. "Sir," says he, "I am so full of publicke concernes and the troubles of businesse in my diocess, that I cannot yet have leisure to thinke of much of my *old delightful* employment. But I hope I have brought my affaires almost to a consistence, and then I may returne againe."

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Scarcely any thing is known of Taylor's private life during the few years he adorned the mitre. It is certain he had a house and farm at Portmore, his old and much-loved retreat, where he lived in intimacy with his friend and former patron the Earl of Conway. It was perfectly natural that he should make this his favourite place of residence.

The works which Taylor published between his elevation to a bishopric and his death, were "Via Intelligentia;" a sermon preached before the university of Dublin, 1662; Χρισις Τελειωτικη, "A Defence and Introduction to the Rite of Confirmation;" three sermons delivered at Christ Church, Dublin; a "Funeral Sermon" for Archbishop Bramhall, all of which appeared in 1663; and his "Dissuasive from Popery," which he had undertaken, though reluctantly, at the desire of the whole body of Irish bishops. This last work appeared in 1664, about three years before his death.

The domestic afflictions which imbittered the close of Taylor's life, were more severe than any which had befallen him at an earlier period. The only remaining son by his second marriage, Edward, he had lost in less than a year after his elevation to the see of Dromore. But this was the least part of his misfortunes. The two surviving sons by his first marriage died about this time, and, as already intimated, under the most distressing circumstances. The elder, who was a cavalry captain in the king's service, was killed in a duel with a brother officer; (an event which, as one of the family assures us, nearly caused the death of the father;) the younger, originally intended for the church, and actually educated at Dublin university with this view, became, as there is too much reason to fear, decidedly vicious. He at all events more than justified such suspicions, by becoming the companion of the licentious Buckingham, at whose house he died of a decline, in 1667.

This event occurred only a few days before Taylor's own death; and the good bishop was in all probability spared the pain even of hearing of it. He was attacked on the third of August, 1667, by a fever, which proved fatal in little more than a week. He died in the fifty-fifth year of his age; and was buried in the church of Dromore.

His funeral sermon was preached by his ancient friend Dr. Rust, whom he had invited over into Ireland in 1661, and who succeeded Taylor in the see of Dromore. That sermon is prefixed to the present edition of Taylor's works, and furnishes some valuable information with respect to the character and habits of the deceased prelate, though it is not always expressed in the happiest manner, nor distinguished for unimpeachable accuracy.

Taylor is said to have possessed much personal beauty; and if his portraits speak truth, (and there is no reason to doubt it,) we may well believe this. The countenance is singularly expressive of the man; his gentle melancholy, the half ascetic turn of his mind, his love of contemplation, are all strongly indicated in his features.

Such is a very rapid sketch of the principal events of Jeremy Taylor's life. Those who wish to see a fuller account of him, so far at least as the scanty materials which time and death, and fire and flood, have left,—for all these have, *it appears, made havoc of the memory and remains of Jeremy Taylor,—will do well to read Bishop Heber's life of this great man. The naked facts stated with all brevity, is all that could be attempted within the compass of the present design. The authority of Bishop Heber's work has in all doubtful matters been followed in the present sketch; a confidence which is fully warranted by the accuracy and care which distinguish it, by the patience of investigation with which the excellent author explored every source of information, and the singular sagacity which he has often displayed in putting together scattered hints and fragments, and in reconciling conflicting statements.

Having given this brief account of Jeremy Taylor's life, it is time to proceed to the principal object of the following pages,—an analysis of his character.

It may be truly affirmed that there have been few men of any note in the annals of literature, whose intellectual character is more difficult of exact analysis, than that of Jeremy Taylor. It is true, indeed, that some of his more prominent peculiarities are stamped on all his productions, even on those which are the least valuable. That surpassing splendour and richness of fancy, with which he adorns even his most ordinary conceptions, are not only obvious to his most negligent readers, but is apt to incapacitate them for a perception of the less dazzling, but scarcely less extraordinary peculiarities of his intellect; peculiarities which render it, in the opinion of the present writer, one

* See Heber's life, p. cxxv.

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of the most complex which was ever submitted to the analysis of intellectual philosophy. Never perhaps, was there a man, in whom qualities so heterogeneous existed in such intimate combination, or who possessed excellences so rare, in such close neighbourhood with such glaring defects. From one end of his works to the other, he alternately charms and provokes us by unparalleled beauties and the most unpardonable faults; he now fills the whole firmament with light and glory, and is now labouring in the darkest and most disastrous eclipse; he is one moment soaring in "the highest heaven of invention," and the next, sinks at once "ten thousand fathoms down" into the nethermost abyss of extravagance or absurdity.

Not a few of the readers and admirers of Jeremy Taylor think all this eccentricity and inequality of genius sufficiently accounted for, by affirming that there was an *immense disparity* between his powers of reasoning and his imagination. This explanation will not bear a close examination; for in the first place, the alleged fact is not true, and even if it were, it would not account for the phenomena. First, the alleged fact is not true. It is far from the intention of the present writer to affirm that Taylor's powers of reasoning are equal to those of his imagination; but it may be safely affirmed, and will be conceded by every careful student of his writings, that there is not that *immense* interval between them which many imagine. But secondly, it may be denied that this vast inferiority of reason, if it really existed, would solve the phenomena of Taylor's mental eccentricities, at least, if by powers of reasoning be meant, what is generally meant, an aptitude for *logical illation*. It would not account even for his *inequalities as a reasoner*, much less for those inequalities which characterize almost equally the exercise of all his other faculties. If he had feeble powers of reasoning, this would indeed sufficiently account for the instances in which he has reasoned ill, but can never account for those instances, and they are far from few, in which he has displayed consummate acuteness and ingenuity; much less can it account for the inequalities, which, as already intimated, and as we shall hereafter have abundant opportunity of showing, characterized alike all the movements of his intellect. These inequalities,—inequalities not between one faculty and another, or in their relative proportions, but in the exercise of all alike,—are not to be accounted for by supposing any very considerable disparity between any two of them; but by supposing the absence of that principle of harmony, usually called judgment in respect of the reason, and taste in respect of the fancy, which alone could secure uniformity and regularity of action. Abstractedly, Jeremy Taylor appears to have possessed nearly all the elements of the highest order of minds, but in the actual exhibition of each, is marked by the same inequality. This view of his intellectual character his works abundantly confirm. He has said many of the profoundest, and some of the most foolish things; he has constructed some of the most acute and ingenious trains of reasoning, and he has fallen prostrate before the most miserable fallacies; he has dragged truth from some of its darkest and most obscure recesses, and has stumbled into the most obvious errors in the light of noon-day; he has often unravelled the most intricate and grasped the most comprehensive questions, and at other times has managed to lose his way in the straightest road, and to miss the object of his search when it lay just under his eye; he has delighted us with the most glorious visions which ever unfolded themselves to an uninspired imagination, and has offended us with the wildest rhapsody and bombast; he has sometimes employed his boundless learning with admirable skill, and for purposes of adequate importance, and has at others lavished it on a prodigal illustration of the most trivial themes. His excellences and his faults are not only equally great, but often dwell close together, nay in the compass of the very same sentence; as though the supreme and only perfect Being had intended to teach us by a very peculiar and affecting exhibition of human frailty, that man "at his best estate is altogether vanity."

On the hypothesis, then, here maintained, Jeremy Taylor's was not a *mutilated* intellect; it possessed all the requisite parts and members separately taken, and that, too, on a gigantic scale, but they were ill compacted, and consequently incapable of harmonious or uniform action; or he might be compared to those unhappy victims of epilepsy, who, though they possess all the faculties of body and of mind, and ordinarily exercise all the functions of life aright, are sometimes suddenly, and without any apparent cause, seized with paroxysms which distort every limb and feature into hideous deformity.

Jeremy Taylor's mind, as actually displayed in his writings, reminds one of some yet unfinished work of Phidias; the outline of more than mortal grace and beauty is half transparent through the still rugged and imperfectly chiselled marble.

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There are many, it is true, who would demur to the statement that Jeremy Taylor's mind, as originally constituted, possessed, in high degrees of excellence, almost all the qualities which usually distinguish the loftiest order of genius. While willingly admitting his transcendent brilliancy of fancy, they would deny that he possessed any considerable force of reason. But the contrary of this is in our opinion conclusively proved by the fact, that there are in his works many *insulated* trains of reasoning marked by a closeness, originality, and acuteness, not often equalled, and seldom surpassed, and for which nothing but great native aptitude for argument can account.

Such passages might be easily multiplied from his "Treatise on Transubstantiation;" his "Dissuasive from Popery;" and above all, from every part of his "Ductor Dubitantium." We cannot refrain from vindicating our representation by citing two or three passages. Take for instance the following from Section XI. of the Treatise against Transubstantiation. He is showing, let it be observed, that reasoning on the very premises on which the papists absurdly affirm that the bread is changed into Christ's body, they are inconsistent in affirming, as they are compelled to do, that the apparent qualities, or, as they term it, the accidents of bread, still remain.

"First; I shall lay this prejudice in the article, as relating to the discourses of reason; that in the words of institution, there is nothing that can be pretended to prove the conversion of the substance of bread into the body of Christ, but the same will infer the conversion of the whole into the whole; and therefore of the accidents of the bread into the accidents of the body. And, in those little pretences of philosophy, which these men sometimes make to cozen fools into a belief of the possibility, they pretend to no instance, but to such conversions, in which, if the substance is changed, so also are the accidents: sometimes the accident is changed in the same remaining substance; but if the substance be changed, the accidents never remain the same individually; or in kind, unless they be symbolical, that is, are common to both, as in the change of elements, of air into fire, of water into earth. Thus when Christ changed water into wine, the substances being changed, the accidents also were altered, and the wine did not retain the colour and taste of water; for then, though it had been the stranger miracle, that wine should be wine, and yet look and taste like water,—yet it would have obtained but little advantage to his doctrine and person, if he should have offered to prove his mission by such a miracle. For if Christ had said to the guests; 'To prove that I am come from God, I will change this water into wine;' well might this prove his mission: but if, while the guests were wondering at this, he should proceed and say, 'Wonder ye not at this, for I will do a stranger thing than it, for this water shall be changed into wine, and yet I will so order it, that it shall look like water, and taste like it, so that you shall not know one from the other:' certainly this would have made the whole matter very ridiculous; and indeed it is a strange device of these men to suppose God to work so many prodigious miracles, as must be in transubstantiation, if it were at all,—and yet that none of these should be seen; for to what purpose is a miracle, that cannot be perceived? It can prove nothing, nor do any thing, when itself is not known whether it be or no. When bread is turned into flesh, and wine into blood, in the nourishment of our bodies, (which I have seen urged for the credibility of transubstantiation,) the bread, as it changes his nature, changes his accidents too, and is flesh in colour, and shape, and dimensions, and weight, and operation, as well as it is in substance. Now let them rub their foreheads hard, and tell us, it is so in the holy sacrament. For if it be not so, then no instance of the change of natural substances, from one form to another, can be pertinent: for, 1. Though it be no more than is done in every operation of a body, yet it is always with change of their proper accidents; and then, 2. It can, with no force of the words of the institution, be pretended, that one ought to be, or can be, without the other. For he that says, this is the body of a man, says that it hath the substance of a human body, and all his consequents, that is, the accidents: and he that says, this is the body of Alexander, says (besides the substance) that it hath all the individuating conditions, which are the particular accidents: and therefore Christ, affirming this to be his body, did as much affirm the change of accidents as the change of substance; because that change is naturally and essentially consequent to this. Now if they say, 'they therefore do not believe the accidents of bread to be changed, because they see them remain;' I might reply, 'Why will they believe their sense against faith?' since there may be evidence, but here is certainty; and it cannot be deceived, though our eyes can: and it is certain, that Christ affirmed it without distinction of one part from another of substance from his usual accidents. 'This is my body:' 'Hoc,' 'Hic,' 'Nunc,' and 'Sic.'—Now, if they think their eyes may be credited for all the words of our blessed Saviour, why shall not their reason also? or is it nothing so certain to the understanding, as any thing is to the eye? If, therefore, it be unreasonable to say, that the accidents of bread are changed against our sense, so it will be unreasonable to say, that the substance is changed against our reason; not but that God can and does often change one substance into another, and it is done in every natural production of a substantial form; but that we say it is unreasonable, that this should be changed into flesh, not to flesh simply, for so it is when we eat it;—nor into Christ's flesh simply, for so it might have been, if he had, as it is probable he did, eaten the sacrament himself,—but into that body of Christ, which is in heaven; he remaining there, and being whole, and impassible, and unfrangible, this, we say, is unreasonable and impossible: and that is now to be proved."

Or take the following exposure of a sophism of his popish antagonist, from the "Introduction" to the "Second Part" of his "Dissuasive." Jeremy Taylor had asserted in the first part of his work that certain doctrines, in later times alleged to be catholic and essentially necessary, could

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not have been so in earlier times, inasmuch as we have the decided dissent of two or three eminent fathers against them; and in such a case the dissent of two or three is, it is alleged, sufficient.

"Against this J. S. hath a pretty sophism, or, if you please, let it pass for one of his demonstrations. 'If one or two denying a point, which many (others) affirm, argues that it is not of faith; then, 'à fortiori,' if one or two affirm it to be of faith, it argues it is of faith, though many others deny it.' This consequent is so far from arising from the antecedent, that nothing in the world destroys it more. For, because the denial of one or two argues a doctrine is not catholic, though affirmed by many, therefore it is impossible that the affirmation of one or two (when there be many dissentients) should sufficiently prove a doctrine to be catholic. The antecedent supposes that true which therefore concludes the consequent to be false; for, therefore, the affirming a thing to be catholic, by two or three, or twenty, does not prove it to be so, unless all consent, because the denying it to be catholic (which the antecedent supposes) by two or three, is a good testimony that it is not catholic. J. S.'s argument is like this; if the absence of a few makes the company not full, then the presence of a few when more are absent, 'à fortiori,' makes the company to be full. But because I must say nothing but what must be reduced to grounds, I have to show the stupendous folly of this argument, a self-evident principle, and that is, 'Bonum,' and so, 'Verum' is 'ex integra causa, malum ex qualibet particulari;' and a cup is broken, if but one piece of the lip be broken; but it is not whole, unless it be whole all over. And much more is this true, in a question concerning the universality of consent, or of tradition. For J. S. does prevaricate in the question, which is, whether the testimony be universal, if the particulars be not agreed: and he instead of that thrusts in another word which is no part of the question: for so he changes it, by saying, 'The dissent of a few does not make but that the article is a point of faith;' for though it cannot be supposed a point of faith, when any number of the catholic fathers do profess to believe a proposition contrary to it; yet possibly it will by some of his side be said to be a point of faith, 'upon other accounts;' as upon 'the church's definition,' or the 'authority of plain Scriptures;' but this will be nothing to J. S.'s hypothesis; for if a part of the catholic fathers did deliver the contrary, there was no irrefragable, catholic, oral tradition of the church, when so considerable a part of the church delivered the contrary as their own doctrine, which is not to be imagined they would have done, if the consent of the church of that age was against it. And if we can suppose this case, that one part of the fathers should say, 'this is the doctrine of the church,' when another part of the fathers are of a contrary judgment,—either they did not say true, and then the fathers' testimony, speaking as witnesses of the doctrine of the church of their age, is not infallible;—or if they did say true, yet their testimony was not esteemed sufficient; because the other fathers, who must needs know it, if it was the catholic doctrine of the church then, do not take it for truth or sufficient. And that maxim which was received in the council of Trent, that 'a major part of voices was sufficient for decreeing in a matter of reformation; but that a decree of faith could not be made, if a considerable part did contradict,' relies upon the same reason; faith is every man's duty, and every man's concern, and every man's learning; and, therefore, it is not to be supposed that any thing can be an article of faith, in which a number of wise and good men are at difference, either as doctors or as witnesses.

The next shall be an admirable passage from the same introduction, in which he most admirably explodes the absurd theory of his opponent,—that the fathers were infallible.

"It is false that 'the testimony of the fathers, speaking of them properly as such, is infallible.' For 'God only is true, and every man a liar;' and since the fathers never pretended to be assisted by a supernatural miraculous aid, or inspired by an infallible spirit; and infallibility is so far beyond human nature and industry, that the fathers may be called angels much rather than infallible; for if they were assisted by an infallible spirit, what hinders but that their writings might be canonical Scriptures? And if it be said they were assisted infallibly in some things, and not in all, it is said to no purpose; for unless it be infallibly known where the infallibility resides, and what is so certain as it cannot be mistaken, every man must tread fearfully, for he is sure the ice is broken in many places, and he knows not where it will hold. It is certain St. Austin did not think the fathers before him to be infallible, when it is plain that in many doctrines, as in the damnation of infants dying unbaptized, and especially in questions occurring in the disputes against the Pelagians about free-will and predestination, without scruple he rejected the doctrines of his predecessors. And when, in a question between himself and St. Jerome, about St. Peter and the second chapter to the Galatians, he was pressed with the authority of six or seven Greek fathers, he roundly answered, that he gave no such honour to any writers of books, but to the Scriptures only, as to think them not to have erred: other authors he read so as to believe them, if they were proved by Scriptures or probable reason. Not because they thought so, but because he thought them proved. And he appeals to St. Jerome, whether he were not of the same mind concerning his own works. And for that St. Jerome hath given satisfaction to the world, in divers places of his own writings: 'I suppose Origen is, for his learning, to be read as Tertullian, Novatus, Arnobius, Apollinarius, and some writers, Greek and Latin, that we choose out that which is good, and avoid the contrary.' So that it is evident the fathers themselves have no conceit of the infallibility of themselves or others,—the prophets, and apostles, and evangelists only excepted; and, therefore, if this be an avowed doctrine of the Roman church, there is no oral tradition for it, no first and self-evident principle to prove it; and either the fathers are deceived in saying they are fallible, or they are not: if they be deceived in saying so, then that sufficiently proves that they can be deceived, and, therefore, that they are not infallible; but if they be not deceived in saying that they are fallible, then it is certain that they are fallible, because they say they are, and in saying so are not deceived. But then if in this the fathers are not deceived,

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then the church of Rome, in one of her avowed doctrines, is deceived, saying otherwise of the fathers than is true, and contrary to what themselves said of themselves."

One more shall suffice; it shall be a short passage from the "Ductor Dubitantium." He is opposing that sad sophism of many of the Roman casuists, that a judge might give sentence even against his conscience, provided his sentence was according to law. It is only a small part of a very long and acute train of reasoning.

"It is true that a judge hath a double capacity, and he hath offices proportionable; some as a man, some as a judge; that is, he hath some natural and essential obligations, some which are superinduced upon his office. And therefore, I refuse to use this distinction as it is commonly used, and so made more subject to mistake and abuse. In this case the judge is not to be considered as a public man and a private man; for private is as much superinduced as public, and his other relations are as much to yield to his essential duty, as that of a judge: such as are the relation of a husband, of a father, of a tutor, of a master; and, amongst these, the more private is often tied to yield to the more public. But therefore in this case the judge is to be considered as a judge and as a man; and in this case the duties are sometimes disparate, but never contrary; and when there is a dispute, the superinduced must yield to that which is original; for whatsoever is his duty as a man, the judge may not prevaricate; for it is the man that is the judge, in the man that office is subjected, and the office of a judge is bound upon him by the conscience of the man. If the judge had two consciences, and two real persons, then it were to be granted that they were to be served and attended to in their several callings; but it is not so: they are but two persons in fiction of law, but materially, and to all real events, the same: it is the same conscience ministering to divers duties: and therefore as the judge is always that man, so his conscience is the conscience of that man; and because as a man he must not go against his conscience,—so when that man is a judge, he must not go against the man's conscience, for the judge is still that man ruled by that conscience. The essential duty of a man cannot by any superinduced formality be dispensed with. Now to go according to our conscience and knowledge is the essential rule and duty of a man, which he cannot put off by being a judge. The new office superinduces new obligations, but none contrary, no more than he can cease being a man by being a judge. 'Certe prior anima quam litera, et prior sermo quam liber, et prior sensus quam stylus, et prior homo quam philosophus et poeta;' He is first a man, and then a philosopher, a poet, or a judge; and that which is first, cannot be prejudiced by what is superinduced. And if the judge go against the conscience of the man, pretending to do according to the conscience of the judge, the man shall be damned,—and where the judge shall then appear, any child can tell. If the bishop of Bayeux, as earl of Kent, will rebel against his prince, the earl of Kent shall lose his head, though the bishop of Bayeux may plead his clergy. For in this there is a great mistake. To be a man and to be a judge, are not to be compared as two distinct capacities of equal consideration. To be a bishop and to be a judge are properly such, and have distinct measures: but to be a man is the subject of the two capacities, and cannot be laid aside as either of the other may; and therefore the distinction is vain and sophistical: and if it could be admitted in metaphysics, (in which yet it appears to have an error,) yet it can never be suffered to pass to real events. This being the ground of all the contrary opinion, and being found false, the superstructure must also fall to the ground."

These specimens might be easily multiplied; but there is no occasion. It is not pretended that these are the best that might possibly be selected; still less that the topics all required such elaborate logic. They have been selected principally on account of their being of convenient length; but though short, they afford sufficient proof that Jeremy Taylor's logical powers were worthy of what we have said of them.

The mere existence of such passages incontrovertibly demonstrates, that his frequent errors of reasoning are not to be imputed to any original feebleness or inferiority in the powers of reasoning themselves, but to some intervening causes, which for the time appeared to paralyze them, and which, as already stated, have dimmed the lustre of his fancy as frequently as they have disturbed the exercise of his reason. Effects must, at least, have proportionate causes; and though where a power exists, we can account for its suspended exercise or frequent perversion, we cannot, upon the supposition that it does *not* exist, account for any one of its appropriate effects. A man who lifts a certain weight, must at least have strength proportioned to the task, even though at other times he may give but feeble indications of his possessing any such strength.

One cause for the very general impression of the comparative feebleness of his reasoning powers, which pervades the minds of Jeremy Taylor's readers, may be readily imagined; his most successful argumentative efforts are to be found in his *controversial* works, and these are little read in comparison with his practical and devotional writings. In these last, of course, impressive sentiment and beautiful imagery are not only more frequent than subtlety of reasoning, but more appropriate.

"As a reasoner," says Bishop Heber, "I do not think him matchless." Few, it is presumed, would be inclined to dispute this position. In originality, continuity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of reasoning, he is vastly inferior to Locke, or Chillingworth, or Barrow. All that is now

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maintained is, that he naturally possessed powers of argument, which, if sedulously cultivated and thoroughly disciplined, would have raised him to a rank amongst logicians, little inferior to that which he has attained in the class of imaginative writers.

It is impossible, however, not to feel that Taylor's powers of reasoning, whether originally feeble, as some think, or strong, as in the opinion of the present writer, never had fair play.

They were often unquestionably overborne by the united influence of his ever-active fancy and his stupendous learning. Strong as his native aptitude for argument might be, it must have been far stronger still, to have maintained any thing like a decided and uniform ascendancy against the combined influence of these disturbing forces. It is true there have been some few men, (but Jeremy Taylor was far from being one of them,) who have been distinguished by a happy harmony between reason and imagination; in whom, the latter has been content to hold the place only of a ministering spirit; never tempted into an ambitious contest for the dominion of the mind; waiting in patient silence the result of the most tedious processes of investigation or reasoning, and still unoffended, though the judgment, in its anxiety to present some train of argument in the closest and most forcible forms, should reject her choicest ornaments or put away in scorn her proffered flowers.

Where, however, the imagination is very vigorous, and the reason not possessed in more than equal measure, it is seldom that the former aspiring faculty will not be sometimes tempted into a contest for the supremacy; and even when in the main subdued, will, by frequent revolt, occasion a divided and distracted empire. This sufficiently accounts for the rarity of those instances in which mutual subordination and harmony are maintained throughout all the movements of the mind; as well as for another fact, that those men have been the greatest as reasoners, and indeed in every other department of intellectual eminence, who have been remarkable for the ascendancy maintained by some particular faculty. There, and there alone, can there be that intense concentration of the mind on one subject—that constancy of purpose—that undivided attention and that perseverance, which are essential to unrivalled excellence in any pursuit whatever.

Not that even where the reason and the imagination are so harmoniously adjusted, as to insure to the former its just prerogatives, and to keep the latter in its due subordination, will the full force of great powers of argument be so likely to be perceived by those who can appreciate it at all, as where those powers exist almost alone. When the argument is denuded of all the ornaments of fancy, then it is that the powers of reasoning it displays will be likely to be best appreciated by the comparatively few who can thoroughly relish it,—because seen alone. Imagination necessarily breaks in on the continuity and restrains the impetuosity of the argument; it tempts to digression; it introduces matter not essentially necessary to the expression of the reasoning; and though by all this, it often renders the reasoning not less, but more intelligible to the *generality* of readers, who could not have comprehended it at all in a more condensed form, yet it disguises and conceals the acuteness of the argument considered merely *as such*. Thoroughly to appreciate the complex excellence of acute and continuous reasoning expressed in the forms of poetry, implies a power of analysis which comparatively few possess; not to mention that it will always *seem* easier, and in some respects is so, to express an argument in the diffusive style, which pleases the imagination, than in the severe methods which a close logic would require. Where the premises and the conclusions immediately deduced from them are logically stated, and all this in as small a compass and with as much brevity as possible,—the powers of the reasoner are likely to be most strongly seen, at least by those who in such a shape can relish his argument at all; though it may still be quite true, that for the bulk of mankind it would be far better to dilute every page of such quintessential logic in ten pages of looser matter. Reasoning, in the above naked shape, resembles the leafless tree of winter; every branch is clearly defined against the sky. It is when the anatomist has laid bare the nerves and muscles, and all that complication and intertexture of parts, which make up that mystery of harmony and beauty, the human frame, that he enters upon those demonstrations which would otherwise have perplexed the student.—Even where Jeremy Taylor's reasoning is most powerful and original, invested, as it always is, with the lavish ornaments of his uncontrollably active fancy, it is, from the causes above specified, often difficult to estimate it at its full value. His beautiful illustrations, his ingenious apologues, his long similes, often extended into allegory, all tend to conceal the strength and sinew of the reasoning; and not only to divide the admiration of the reader, but often to fix on the illustrations alone a great part of the admiration which is justly due to the reasoning also.

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In Jeremy Taylor's case, however, we do not lay very much stress on this circumstance. Some allowance, indeed, ought justly to be made for it, as must always be the case where argument is conveyed in the language of poetry. But in estimating his character as a reasoner, it is not the *apparent* injury it may have sustained from the mere profusion of his imagination, which chiefly demands attention. It is the *real* injury, which, in many instances, it has sustained from this, as well as from other causes,—more especially his boundless and ill-digested erudition. The mere exuberance of his fancy, or the excessive copiousness of his style, may *conceal* from the reader the strength of his reasoning when just, but cannot render it unsound. They may impair its effect on the mind of a severe thinker, but cannot diminish its intrinsic validity; nay, in some cases may even enhance its practical worth. Unhappily, however, in Jeremy Taylor's case, they have often done more than this. There can be no doubt that in many instances, the prodigality of his fancy and the vastness of his learning have oppressed his reasoning powers, and made them not only appear less vigorous than they are, but really made them as feeble as they appear. They have often occasioned *positive inaccuracy* in reasoning, and still more frequently rendered his reasoning, even when radically sound, so *obscure* as to be almost unintelligible. That they often occasioned positive inaccuracy will appear wonderful to none, who consider how fruitful of fallacies and ambiguity must be that excessive employment of figurative language, and that loose and copious diction, which were the inevitable result of an imagination so ardent and a range of reading so boundless. But even where he is really or probably sound in his reasoning, the same causes often render him so obscure as to be nearly or wholly unintelligible. He so overlays his thoughts with words—wanders into such frequent episodes—takes up so much of extraneous matter in the course of his argument—indulges in such rhetorical exaggerations—dazzles and confounds by such incessant flashes of imagination—and overwhelms and wearies the reader with such an array of learned quotations, with such a waste of needless and ill-sorted erudition, that to trace some of his trains of arguments is like tracing the course of some river which gradually loses itself in a morass. The stream, it may be, is clearly defined for a short distance; but the lazy waters soon begin to ooze through the dissolving banks, and gradually diffusing themselves over a boundless expanse of mud and reeds, stream and bank at length both disappear, and you feel that if you follow you are inevitably lost. Just so it is oftentimes in tracing the progress of Jeremy Taylor's reasoning. His preliminary propositions, it may be, seem clear enough; but he soon wanders into such an immensity of poetical ornament and learned citation, indulges in so many digressions, enters on so many extraneous topics, and expresses all in such a vast *quantity* of words, that you begin to be utterly perplexed; the channel of the argument at length almost disappears, and you find yourself on the brink of an unfathomable gulf, of that

> "Serbonian bog,
> Where armies whole have sunk."

These extreme cases are, we admit, comparatively rare, but he who wishes to see our observations exemplified by a particular instance, has only to turn to the "Chapter on the Law of Nature," in the "Ductor Dubitantium." We feel persuaded, so far as we are able clearly to penetrate his meaning, that Taylor's fundamental principles are correct and sound; yet he has managed to wrap them up in such a mass of words—has here and there reasoned on such apparently contradictory principles—has qualified and seemingly retracted so much of what he had previously affirmed—that it is no easy task to trace the exact course of his argument, or to perceive the entire consistency of his opinions. Precisely the same observations apply to several other passages in the same work; as for instance, his very dubious speculations, as to "the lawfulness of public men sometimes doing evil for public necessity." Similar instances occur in his other works, more especially in his "Unum Necessarium."

His ardent fancy was a source of occasional inaccuracy and of frequent obscurity in reasoning, in another less direct manner. The inevitable tendency of a very imaginative mind, is to exaggeration and undue strength of expression. Thus in the utterance of a present feeling, or in giving strong expression to what is deemed an important truth, such a mind is very apt to pass the cautious bounds which the severity of logical truth has imposed; and if such language be interpreted, (as in controversial pieces it generally is, and ought in strict justice to be,) with any degree of literality, the author may often be supposed to advocate most pernicious error, where he is in fact

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only stating a sentiment substantially true in too unqualified a manner; and if, as often happens, he has expressed himself with equal want of caution when treating the same topics under other aspects, he may be even charged with actual contradictions. This is remarkably the case with Jeremy Taylor; no one can less afford to be interpreted literally, or by single passages, than himself; and the observation now made will go far to account for many of the apparent contradictions which are to be met with in his writings. It is far from being asserted, indeed, that many of these discrepancies are not *real* as well as apparent; for such was the intensity with which Jeremy Taylor felt any *present* view of a subject, that he sometimes falls into extravagances of sentiment as well as of expression. No more is affirmed, than that a fair interpretation of his sentiments, with a candid reference to the above-mentioned peculiarities of his intellectual character, will sufficiently account for many of the seemingly contradictory statements with which he has been charged.

The reader may very easily conceive the apparent errors into which Jeremy Taylor's unguarded strength of expression and rhetorical exaggerations might often lead him, from a very simple illustration. And it the better answers our purpose that, in this case, he *could* not be misunderstood. In his "sermon" on the "Foolish Exchange," when expatiating in a strain of magnificent eloquence on the inconceivable *worth* of the soul, he affirms that, "besides that this was a donation of intelligent faculties, such as we understand to be perfect and essential, or *rather the essence* of God;——!"

Now here he cannot be misunderstood; he cannot for a moment be imagined to mean literally what his words convey. Every one therefore would easily perceive, and as readily admit, that he was merely indulging in a rhetorical amplification. But if he had expressed himself thus strongly where the *subject itself* did not secure him from misinterpretation, (as he often does,) he would very probably be suspected of some dangerous error, even though his meaning might be equally innocent. Nay, even in such a plain instance as the one above, there have not been wanting theologians in former ages, so uncandid, so ready to avail themselves of an opponent's indiscretion, that they would have been pleased to interpret even such an obvious hyperbole to Jeremy Taylor's disadvantage, and probably affected to believe that he had embraced certain wild doctrines of some of the ancient philosophers and mystics!

In the *general conduct* of a train of argument, it need hardly be said, that the causes already specified as affecting his character as a reasoner often produced like ill effects.

It may, moreover, be observed, that some of these causes must have exerted no mean influence on the early development of his mind. The activity of his fancy and his appetite for knowledge must have effectually precluded that thorough discipline which in his case was so peculiarly necessary.

The nature and extent of the influence of these disturbing causes on his character as a reasoner, are fully apparent, if we compare his usual style of argumentation with that of the great masters of the art. Such men are chiefly characterized by exactness and precision in the use of terms, the utmost conciseness and brevity of diction, the strictest continuity of reasoning, and as it regards the general management of their subject, a judicious selection of proofs, and a stern rejection not only of every unsound, but of every questionable argument. Compared in all these points, Jeremy Taylor's defects become immediately apparent. There are few men who more frequently dispense with exact and rigid definitions of terms; few who introduce new ones with greater license, or who vary the old with less caution; few who use them in a more ambiguous or indeterminate manner. As to copiousness of diction, he is faulty almost to a proverb, not only using many words where a few would suffice, but oftentimes actually darkening his meaning by excessive amplification, and instead of endeavouring to make it clear by one perspicuous and unexceptionable expression, vainly striving to effect it by a wearisome repetition of what is dubious and obscure.

But as it is in the nice selection and judicious arrangement of arguments really decisive of the question, and the rejection of every thing either unnecessary or extraneous, that the most powerful reasoners have chiefly manifested their skill, so it is in these points that Jeremy Taylor most frequently shows his inferiority to them. It is true, indeed, that in all reasoning which depends solely on moral evidence, the conclusion must depend on a calculation of separate probabilities; and as each of these probabilities—often drawn from the remotest sources—forms a distinct argument, there may undoubtedly be cases in which these several probable arguments are so nearly balanced in force as to make it difficult to say which shall be retained and which rejected, or to render it necessary to adduce them all. In general, however, this is not the case. Such instances form the exceptions. In all ordinary cases

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there are sure to be a few arguments of a magnitude sufficient to decide the question in debate; and these are the arguments on which a judicious reasoner will always fix; which he will endeavour to put in the strongest light, and on which he will willingly suspend the fate of his reasoning. And in order that they may be seen in the most favourable light, he will not only think it undesirable to say all that *might* be said on the question, but will say not a word more than is absolutely necessary. He knows that a few such arguments, (more luminous and perspicuous for being stated alone,) will have more effect than if combined with a number of inferior considerations, of little intrinsic value. He knows very well, that unless he were reasoning with minds of uncommon compass and comprehensiveness, (which cannot generally be the case,) minds which can distinguish between the relative values of different arguments, and allot to each its due place in the final calculation; which can reject an argument which appears inconclusive, without suffering it to impair the force of others; and which, if all are sound, can comprehend them all,—he would be likely to injure rather than benefit his cause, by adducing, in complicated cases, every argument which *might* be adduced. The generality of mankind would rather be bewildered than enlightened by such scrupulous exactness, and by such a minute and elaborate induction of particulars. Ordinary reasoners, like the ancient Pharisees, would forget the "weightier matters" in this laborious tithing of "mint and cummin;" or at best, the attempt to calculate such infinitesimal arguments, would impair the force of the more important and decisive ones, by distracting and dividing the attention of the reader; not to say that in many cases—and we could adduce several from the "Ductor Dubitantium" alone—they would extend to such length and magnitude as to produce, when the mind has traversed them all, only a vague and unsatisfactory impression. They have all been seen, it is true, but few are distinctly remembered; the whole have passed under review in detail, but the mind is baffled in the attempt to calculate them all; the very number of the arguments has transformed what might have been a well-appointed army into an indistinguishable rabble. Their very strength has been the cause of weakness. Moreover, if any argument be not only not seen to be conclusive, but supposed to be dubious, it will extend suspicion to the rest. It will not be, as in all fairness it ought to be, simply *deducted*. Nor can this be avoided, so long as the generality of men are not only gifted with a feeble reason, but enslaved by prejudice. The judicious reasoner, therefore, will, except in very remarkable cases, (as when the arguments are all of nearly equal value, or when he is writing for a peculiar class of readers,) confine himself to those topics which are really decisive of the question. By lopping off the superfluous branches, he knows that the strength and majesty of the trunk will be only the more apparent. Having accurately stated the larger sums, he will not descend into a piddling calculation of fractions and farthings.

This, too, he will do not only for the purposes of general conviction, but from the force of his own logical habits. *Proof* is what he seeks, and in his estimation, the most direct road to it is the best. He will not be satisfied with less than conclusive reasons; and he does not ask for more.

If the mere multiplication of *unnecessary* or *simply inconclusive* arguments has a tendency to impair the force of a train of reasoning, much more, of course, is this the result of the injudicious introduction of arguments actually unsound. We need not mention that they give the caviller and the sophist at least *something* to refute; success which often encourages such disingenuous reasoners to pretend that they have refuted every thing, though the main parts of the argument, it may be, remain as irrefragable as ever. We find by experience, that such unwise intermixture of arguments, sound and unsound, has a most unfavourable effect even on the mind of the fair and honest reader; at all events, unless he be a person not only of unusual candour, but of unusual perspicacity too. It is true that, in all reason, an unsound argument, as already stated, ought merely to be detached from the rest, and then the force of the remainder calculated as though such unsound argument had never been introduced; but we find in fact that it is not so; nor can it be so, so long as human beings are not pure intelligencies, but creatures of passion and prejudice. They inevitably extend their ordinary rules of judgment and conduct to cases in which they do not apply. The discovery of a few acts of fraud and treachery shall chill the ardour of general benevolence, and lower the estimate of human virtue. In a similar manner, the unequivocal detection of a few fallacies in a train of argument, is sure to infect the rest with suspicion; to engender a belief that as some have been found hollow, sophistry lurks under all; and that it only requires closer attention or a keener perspicacity to penetrate their disguises. Or if the writer be still supposed sincere and honest,

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the caviller objects, that a mind which could be imposed on by such convicted fallacies is not trustworthy in his other statements. Probably most men have been more or less conscious of the influence of these contagious doubts, when following a train of argument of very varying merit. The reader is apt to feel, at least unless he possesses a much larger share of intelligence and much severer logical habits, than characterize the generality of mankind, that an invalid argument cannot be merely subtracted from the series to which it belongs; strong association spreads from one part to another, until they are inseparably viewed as a whole. They are not a mere aggregate of still perfectly separable parts; they are held together, if we may so speak, not merely by proximity, but by a sort of chemical union; by the strong affinity of mental association. They remind one of the mixture of two fluids which enter into intimate combination with each other, a combination from which no ordinary process can release them; nor is it an uncommon thing to see a person of feeble reason, viewing with suspicion, through his whole life, a really *valid* argument, from strong recollection of certain ludicrously *weak* arguments with which it was associated, and which probably he had been long accustomed to laugh at.

We have been the longer on this point, because it serves to illustrate not merely a prominent, but, it may be affirmed, the *most* prominent defect in the character of Jeremy Taylor as a *reasoner*. There is no man, so far as we know, who (as has been already remarked) is so deficient in a principle of selection and judicious arrangement of his proofs; no man who is so apt to diminish the force or injure the impression of his reasoning by an absurd intermixture, not only of questionable arguments, but sometimes of the most unpardonable fallacies; no man who more fatally mingles his "iron with clay."—But Jeremy Taylor is not only guilty of the frequent employment of sound and unsound arguments in the establishment of the same proposition, but he often places arguments of most various value in the closest juxtaposition in his series of proof. The weak are not put by themselves, with a wise caution that they are merely thrown in as some slight additament of probability; no such thing. He carries his gold and his baser metal all in one purse.

The fact is, often he seems to have marshalled his arguments in the order in which they first suggested themselves; and thus the rawest recruits are often seen side by side with the best disciplined in the troop. Illustrations of these defects will immediately offer themselves to the attentive reader of his works.

These peculiarities are in great measure to be attributed to his vast and ill-digested learning, and the credulous regard to authority and antiquity which was the result of it. Hence he frequently seems to estimate his arguments rather by number than by weight, and to adduce not such as his deliberate judgment would approve, but such as his multifarious reading has supplied. No matter how suspicious the source from which an argument is obtained or how insufficient the grounds on which it rests, it is sure to be adduced if it answers a present purpose. The most problematical, nay, the most evidently fabulous facts in physics or history, are not unfrequently pressed into the service, not merely as illustrations, but as grave analogical arguments. A curious instance of this occurs in his correspondence with his friend Evelyn. Evelyn, it appears, had been troubled with some doubts on the subject of the separate existence of the soul after death. In a long, and on the whole a very admirable letter, Jeremy Taylor endeavours to solve them; and amongst many other much sounder arguments gravely urges on his friend a consideration of the following absurdities.

"But to the thing. That the felicity of christians is not till the day of judgment I doe believe next to an article of my creed: and so far I consent with you: but then I cannot allow your consequent; that the soul is mortal. That the soule is a complete substance, I am willing enough to allow in disputation; though, indeed, I believe the contrary; but I am sure no philosophy and no divinity can prove its being to be wholly relative and incomplete. But, suppose it: it will not follow that, therefore, it cannot live in separation. For the flame of a candle, which is your owne similitude, will give light enough to this enquiry. The flame of a candle can consist or subsist, though the matter be extinct. I will not instance Licetus his lampes, whose flame had stood still 1500 years, viz. in Tullie's wife's vault. For, if it had spent any matter, the matter would have been exhaust long before that: if it spends none, it is all one as if it had none; for what need is there of it, if there be no use for it, and what use if no feeding the flame, and how can it feed but by spending itselfe? But the reason why the flame goes out when the matter is exhaust, is because the litle particle of fire is soon overcome by the circumfient aire and scattered, when it wants matter to keepe it in union and closenesse: but then, as the flame continues not in the relation of a candle's flame, when the matter is exhaust, yet fire can abide without matter to feed it: for itselfe is matter; it is a substance. And so is the soule: and as the element of fire, and the celestial globes of fire eat nothing, but live of themselves; so can the soule when it is

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divested of its relative, and so would the candle's flame, if it could get to the regions of fire, as the soule does to the region of spirits.

Questionable facts in ancient history are still more frequently employed as argument, than doubtful facts in science. It must be admitted, however, that they occur chiefly as illustrations. To this point we shall recur again in a subsequent part of this Essay.

It has been already stated, that it is not meant that Jeremy Taylor's reasoning is *generally* characterized by the defects which have now been pointed out. We only mean that they are of no unfrequent occurrence, and, in a greater or less degree, impair the effect of all his controversial writings.

We know not whether in the above remarks we have always succeeded in clearly expressing our meaning, but any reader who will carefully compare any portions of Jeremy Taylor's elaborate "Dissuasion from Popery," or his "Treatise on Transubstantiation," with those portions of Chillingworth's great work, "The Religion of Protestants," which treat of the same topics, may easily find an illustration of it.

It will be recollected that we have in a former part of this Essay contended that Jeremy Taylor possessed far greater *native* powers of reasoning and speculation, than probably the generality of his readers would be willing to admit; and we have attributed their partial failure and their almost habitual perversion to the operation of specific causes. If it be asked which of those two great elements of the philosophical character he possessed in the higher degree,—compass or subtlety of mind; an aptitude for a comprehensive investigation of premises or for logical illation, it might be replied that he appears to have originally possessed both in a nearly equal degree, but in the exercise of these qualities has exhibited all his characteristic inequality. Thus he frequently displays, more especially in his controversial writings, an acuteness which startles the reader with delight and surprise, by eliciting inferences at once the most unexpected and just, from some trivial or well-known premises; while, at other times, he is deceived by an ambiguity that would hardly have imposed on the most unexperienced tyro. Again, he often manifests in the discussion of intricate questions,—such, for instance, as frequently occur in his "Ductor Dubitantium," a reach and comprehensiveness of mind seldom equalled. All the arguments that could by the remotest possibility affect the decision of the question are adduced from every conceivable source and from every region of speculation.* But, at other times, he will found important conclusions on the most partial and contracted data imaginable.

It may be observed, however, that his comprehensiveness is rather that of a *learned* man, than of a man possessed of very strong original powers of observation; of one who was accustomed to accumulate the materials of reasoning, than of one whose mind spontaneously suggested them; of one who had ransacked every source of evidence, than of one accustomed to digest, discriminate, and select. Even his most extensive investigations, and his most elaborate trains of reasoning, probably contain few propositions or arguments, which might not be found in some writer or other, although often collected from the obscurest sources and from the literature of every country and of every age. Indeed he generally puts this matter beyond doubt by quoting some author or other, for at least the germ of his thoughts; thoughts, by the by, which but for him might have lurked for ever, without the slightest risk of quotation, within the profound recesses in which his most discursive and multifarious reading first discovered them. In this respect his honesty (if, indeed, it were not rather simple-hearted love of learning) is well worthy of general imitation. If he had availed himself of his erudition to the full extent, he might, in innumerable instances, have obtained the praise of greater originality than the simplicity of his nature coveted; for all that he had to do was simply to adopt the thoughts of others without acknowledging the source from which they were derived: in very many instances there would have been little danger of his being convicted of plagiarism. The *forms* of reasoning he has adopted are of course characterized by the peculiarities of the age. Its outward fashion is that of the schoolmen, whose barbarous technicalities, formal divisions, and parade of logical method, he abundantly employs. This was in some measure to be expected; and, in such

* The reader may see a striking instance of these observations, in Taylor's remarks on the Provinces of Faith and Reason, in Rule III. Chap. II. of his "Ductor," which contain many passages conceived in the noblest spirit of philosophy; and a still more striking one in Rule VIII. of the same chapter, in which he is discussing the alleged lawfulness of a judge's giving sentence against his conscience, if that sentence be according to law.

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an age, a slight infusion of such terms of art merely to preserve a more severely logical method, to secure greater brevity and compression, or to obviate the necessity of lengthened explanations, might be pardoned in treatises intended for the learned alone, or on philosophical or metaphysical subjects. Nothing, however, can be more ridiculous than the ostentatious employment of them, in which not Jeremy Taylor alone, but almost all the divines of the age indulged; and that too, not merely in erudite treatises, but in "sermons" and "discourses," professedly intended for the vulgar. Nor did the matter rest here. It had been well for the divines of that age, if they had suffered only thus far from their familiarity with the schoolmen; if it had merely rendered some of their writings comparatively obscure or unintelligible, from peculiarities of method and expression. But such familiarity necessarily led in some measure (though perhaps, for reasons hereafter to be stated, this was less the case with Jeremy Taylor than with most of the divines of his age) to an adoption of the methods of reasoning and the style of speculation, which had characterized the schools, and the influence of which was still far from inconsiderable on the existing systems of theology. Not that the schoolmen by any means deserve the indiscriminate censure and ridicule which are so often poured upon them; as the slightest actual investigation of their writings cannot fail to convince any impartial man. Their grand error, an error which, it must be confessed, vitiates so large a portion of their speculations, consists in the frequent assumption of their premises; an error of prodigious magnitude. Yet in their mere trains of deductive reasoning from those premises, they often exhibit a subtlety and acuteness, which few even of the most exact reasoners have reached. On this point, Bishop Heber has justly remarked that some of their works deserve to be regarded "as models of fair and patient investigation; the works of men whose errors are rather from their imperfect means of knowledge, than from any defect in (what they principally professed) their mode of arranging knowledge already acquired." In this respect, and this alone, are they entitled to our admiration;—when viewed in relation to truth, and the only rational methods of acquiring it, they are too often utterly worthless.

Now though it is true that in the seventeenth century the principles of inductive science were not only generally recognised, but had done much to purify several branches of natural philosophy, and to restrain that license of speculation which had been the characteristic of preceding ages, the influence of the scholastic philosophy was far from small. It has been already stated, that philosophers and theologians not merely borrowed from it its technicalities and its forms, (a circumstance which alone would tend to maintain it in a certain degree of influence,) but from early familiarity with it, unconsciously imbibed somewhat of its spirit and *habit*. And thus it is, that many of the writers of the seventeenth century, both philosophical and theological, exhibit precisely the character which might be expected to result from a nearly equal discipline in the old and the new schools; an alternation of dogmatism and caution; they now catch a strong glimpse of the recently elicited principles of inductive science and maintain a rigid adherence to them, and now relapse into all the absurdities of an exploded philosophy. This was natural; the errors of ages are not to be rectified in a day. When the limbs have been long galled with fetters, they will, even when restored to freedom, still fall into the unnatural movements which long constraint has imposed; *οἱ πολὺν χρόνον δεθέντες, κἂν λυθεῖεν, οὐ δυνάμενοι βαδίζειν, ὑποσκελίζονται· ὑπὸ τῆς πολυχρονίου τῶν δεσμῶν συνηθείας.*

All great revolutions in the history of the human mind must, it is obvious, be effected slowly, and through a long series of intermediate stages. Now, if the dubious character above described clings even to many of the *natural* philosophers of the seventeenth century; if they, like the first christian proselytes from judaism, were so apt to revert to the "beggarly elements" of ancient dispensations of philosophy, which had "grown old" and were fast vanishing away; if even in Bacon, for instance, the first systematic expositor of the principles of a purer philosophy, we sometimes see such a strange oblivion of his own principles; if even *he* can indulge in assumptions as dogmatical as any he condemns,—how much more might the same inconsistency be expected in writers on theology; a department of science which the inductive philosophy has been the last to purify, if, indeed, it may be said to be even yet purified. Nor is it matter of wonder, that it should have yielded more slowly than the several branches of physical science, to the ascendancy of more accurate principles of philosophizing; for though it does not justify, it necessarily affords scope to far greater license and rashness of speculation than any other science. Here the human mind could lose itself even in its most eccentric flights and its most presumptuous moods. Amidst the infinite, the

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invisible and the eternal, it could construct innumerable theories, which, though utterly destitute of proof, had at least one advantage;—they could safely defy *direct* confutation. When a purer philosophy therefore began to diffuse itself, it might be anticipated that in these realms of speculation the spirit of presumptuous dogmatism would hold dominion longest; that these seats would be the last from which the "parting genius" should be

"with sighing sent."

Those who had speculated and dogmatized for so many ages on all the profound mysteries which such a field supplies; who had penetrated the boundless regions, not only of "entities," but of "possibilities;" who had speculated not only on what God had done, but on what he might do and could do; who had amused themselves in their sublime science of "angelography," as they termed it, with most exact descriptions of the invisible world; who had settled all questions of order and precedence amidst the celestial hierarchies; who had ascertained the number, the ranks, the nature, and the occupations of angels; who, in a word, had determined with infallible certainty all those questions relating to the future world, about which the human mind is so intensely curious, but which Scripture has wisely left in total darkness, could hardly be expected to relinquish without reluctance this vast territory of speculation, this world of phantoms and illusions: nor can we be surprised that when they first saw the new-born light of a better philosophy shooting into the bosom of night, and invading and circumscribing the sphere of their shadowy dominion, they should have felt like that "anarch old," whom Milton describes as trembling for the empire of chaos, and murmuring at those usurping glories of creation which threatened to hurl him from his throne.

There is, indeed, no reason why the same severe system of induction should not be adopted in theology, which has already been applied in the various departments of physical science. The Scriptures stand in the same relation to the theologian as the world of matter to the natural philosopher, and whatever cannot be proved from them either directly or by undeniable deduction, has no title to be considered any thing more than conjecture and hypothesis; conjecture and hypothesis, it may be, sustained by very high degrees of probability, but conjecture and hypothesis still.

The reverence for the scriptures which the principles of the Reformation inspired, and the paramount authority which was soon attached to their decisions, first introduced more sober views of theology; still the remains of the "inveterate evil" were seen, more or less, throughout the whole of the sixteenth and greater part of the seventeenth century.

In Jeremy Taylor it occasionally discloses itself in an indolent acquiescence and credulous *assent* to some of the dubious speculations of the schoolmen; or, still more frequently, in a hesitating *dissent* from them. Still, upon the whole, Jeremy Taylor indulged as little in that speculative theology which was the delight of the schools, as any divine of his day. Indeed, it is wonderful, considering their vast compass, that his writings should contain so little of this nature. It is to be attributed chiefly to the eminently practical character of his theology; the great mass of his works are of a devotional or ethical character; while such of them as are strictly controversial, are almost wholly on subjects which afforded little temptation to the introduction of those topics which are most dear to the spirit of speculation. A mere glance at any index of the contents of Taylor's works will immediately serve to show how very large a proportion of them is purely practical. He was more apt by far to fall into errors connected with the erroneous *physics* of the schools, than into those connected with their speculative theology.

There was one department of philosophy to which Jeremy Taylor devoted himself more than any other, and which he was well qualified to prosecute with success; we mean that of *morals*. It was the one undoubtedly which he most sedulously cultivated and in which he found his chief delight: and it may be remarked, that when the question is not one of pure speculation, it is hardly possible to have a safer guide; nay, he is very rarely wrong in his final decisions, even when his reasoning by which he arrives at his conclusion, may not be in all respects sound. But then in all *such* discussions, he had something above and beyond his reason to guide him; he had that which in *this* department of philosophy will often do more than the most subtle logic or the most vigorous powers of speculation;—a mind enamoured with goodness; a soul imbued with the sublime spirit of christianity. Hence it is we see in him so much of that intense and ennobling love of ideal excellence, that sublime enthusiasm in the cause of virtue and goodness, which pervade the writings of Plato,

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and which so often lead him practically right, even where his metaphysical speculations are wrong. These feelings, (both in the case of Plato and Jeremy Taylor,) conjoined with a powerful imagination, and in the latter case purified and exalted by the spirit of christianity, shed over their writings an ineffable grandeur and beauty, for the want of which no severity of method, no exactness of definition, no cold accuracy, no closeness of reasoning, could have atoned. In morals, a susceptible conscience and a love of goodness will often lead, by a short cut, to the profoundest philosophy; a philosophy, which if it has in some measure dispensed with the guidance of reason, has exchanged it for what rivals the certainty of instinct. These qualities, and these alone, can impart to ethical speculation, what frigid reason can never supply; that glow of feeling, that enthusiasm and ardour, which can alone impress and touch the heart, and without which, indeed, ethical speculations are of all the dryest and the least interesting. None but such minds as those of Jeremy Taylor, can ever clothe the meagre skeletons of moral philosophy in their proper dress of immortal grace and beauty. Other men may *anatomize* virtue; these alone can *paint* her.

Accordingly we find in Jeremy Taylor, more than in any writer of his age, the most ravishing descriptions of every species of moral excellence, whether separately or in combination, and the most terrible delineations of all the varieties of moral deformity. In his "Great Exemplar," his "Holy Living and Dying," his "Sermons," and his "Ductor Dubitantium," are to be found numberless passages on these subjects for which we shall in vain seek parallels in the whole compass of English literature;—no, not even in the pages of Hooker or of Barrow.

The next quality of Jeremy Taylor's intellect which demands our notice, (we say the next, because though the first in his own mind, it is second in value and importance in the order of intellectual excellence,) is his *imagination*. Here a very few paragraphs may suffice; for, who that can read only a few pages of the works of this wonderful genius, can be ignorant that this was the faculty by which he was distinguished above almost every other individual of his species? In viewing this part of his mental constitution, there is no necessity for the nice discrimination and analysis, which are necessary in determining the relative value of his powers of reasoning, and the place they ought to occupy in an estimate of his whole intellectual character. *This* was not, as was the case with his reason, repressed by other more powerful faculties. On the contrary, it bound all the rest to its chariot wheels and rode through the whole of his writings in one long triumph. The severe discipline of reason could not tame, nor could floods of learning quench it. In estimating the astonishing vigour and exuberance of this faculty, we are to take into account not only the incessant, the prodigal display it is ever making, but the unpromising topics which it has often succeeded in adorning, and the obstacles in defiance of which it has exerted itself. As to topics, he seems to afford conclusive proof, that to a mind in the highest degree imaginative, there is no subject of speculation, out of the pure mathematics, which may not be enriched with poetical ornament; scarcely any materials so hard that they cannot be wrought into forms of beauty. It would be difficult to conceive any subjects more unpromising, or more sterile, than those of which his controversial writings treated, and still more those with which his great work, the "Ductor Dubitantium," is occupied; subjects in which the generality of casuistical writers have, it must be admitted, adopted a style of writing, which most exactly harmonizes with the repulsiveness and dryness of the topics themselves. With Jeremy Taylor it is altogether different; metaphor and simile, sparkling allusions and enlivening epithets, classical fable and ingenious apologue, relieve and adorn the pages, and present the reader, at every step of his toilsome pilgrimage, with unexpected offerings of fruits and flowers. His fancy to the reader is as refreshing as those aromatic odours, which stole on the senses of the wearied soldiers of Cyrus when toiling through the sandy desert of Arabia. We have said that there is scarcely a subject so hopelessly abstruse, that Jeremy Taylor cannot adorn it with grace, or clothe it with beauty. Even the frozen, the arctic circle of metaphysics and casuistry, is not beyond the magic touch of his all-subduing genius; when *he* treats these subjects, they are visited for once with the glow of a summer sun, and verdure and beauty, flowers and foliage, spring up in that region of perpetual snows; when *he* treats them, it may be said, "the winter is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

But not only does the felicitous manner in which he has treated the most unpromising topics, demonstrate the unparalleled force of his imagination; it is as conclusively shown by another circumstance. He has exerted it with the utmost freedom, in defiance of the hebetating and deadening influences of his immense learning. Such was the extraordinary buoyancy of his fancy, that it dances lightly over the waters,

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in spite of that vast mass of erudition with which his mind was laden, and under which any other would inevitably have sunk.

It is true there is no faculty, which, when possessed in any considerable degree, is distinguished by such irrepressible energy and elasticity as the imagination; but it may be added, there is none, the lustre of which may be so soon dimmed by an intense and prolonged attention to pursuits uncongenial with it. Nor must we consider merely how large a portion of Taylor's life must have been spent in the bare accumulation of knowledge; but what was the *kind* of knowledge to the acquisition of which he must have devoted by far the larger portion of his youth and manhood. It was precisely of that kind, which abstractedly is least congenial to such a mind as his. Yet his truly wonderful familiarity with the dull field of ecclesiastical, metaphysical, casuistical, and scholastic literature, still left his imagination perfectly unimpaired; it still seems to have possessed all its originality, freshness, and inventive power. Nay, his immense learning, unwieldy as it was, was the mere slave—the obedient minister of his boundless fancy. It is a chaos from which he is perpetually working up new creations and combinations; a collection of antique dresses and quaint devices, in which thought may sport itself in a thousand different shapes and masquerade it in perpetual change. Indeed, on this point, it may be observed, that though Jeremy Taylor's illustrations are gathered from every quarter, though he ranges through all nature and art, and in his idolatrous love of poetic forms, seeks for "similitudes" in which to embody the spirit of thought, from "things in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth," yet they are drawn from history and those sources which nothing but his learning could supply, more frequently than from other sources. Analogies founded on ancient story and fable, on ancient ceremonies and rites, on ancient customs and opinions, abound in all his writings, and serve to show how the materials of the imagination may be augmented and multiplied by vast and eccentric learning, when the imagination itself is possessed of a proportionate vigour. The effects of learning on such a mind, remind one of the effects of certain narcotics on certain constitutions; what would instantly seal up the eyelids of one man in slumber, would on another only have the effect of quickening and expanding all the faculties, enlarging the sphere of their activity and their capacity of exertion.

It is curious to see with what address Jeremy Taylor will extract some of his most beautiful illustrations from the most worthless parts of his multifarious reading. The most absurd fictions of classical mythology, or the equally absurd legends of ecclesiastical writers, the most extravagant fable ancient and modern, the oddest, the most eccentric matters, which any other mind would have thought it toil to read at all, and almost a sacred duty to forget, are carefully treasured in his memory, and then are felicitously employed, just as they are wanted, to adorn some important doctrine or some beautiful moral truth. These analogies are often gathered from sources so remote, that one is perplexed to conceive how they should ever have occurred to his mind, or by what eccentric freak of association they were suggested, while they leave us in a maze of admiration and wonder at the unwearied activity of the imaginative faculty which they display. So frequent are the illustrations of this kind, that not the slightest particle of his learning seems to be useless; not the most insignificant fact his memory has treasured up, is wasted like the mud left by the inundation of the Nile, it is all rich with the promise of a golden harvest. Thus he compares the "false tongue," to those looking-glasses in the temple of Smyrna, which represented "the best faces as crooked, ugly, and deformed." When he wishes to illustrate the fact, that the "splendour and the zeal" which often mark the early career of a young convert, "are apt to turn, the first into pride and the second into uncharitableness," he beautifully reminds us of what "Homer said of the Sirian star," "it shines fiercely and brings fevers." If he has read in some strange legend book, that "in the tomb of Terentia, certain lamps burned under-ground many ages together, which as soon as ever they were brought into the air, and saw a bigger light, went out never to be re-enkindled," he beautifully applies it to illustrate the melancholy fact, that "so long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God lifts us up from the gates of death and carries us abroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness; and that we cannot be preserved in heat and light, but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow." When he would illustrate the folly of those presumptuous men, who sin with less fear, "because there have been some men who have fallen into fearful crimes, and yet by the grace of God have recovered, and repented, and lived," he reminds us of what "Diagoras said to them who showed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwreck, upon their prayers and vows to Neptune,—that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed and yet were drowned." These are a few slight specimens of a

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class of illustrations perpetually occurring in his works. His boundless learning is constantly supplying some rare and striking analogy.

In almost every form of imaginative expression he seems to take equal delight; nor is there any, of which his principal works do not supply innumerable specimens. The compact metaphor, the formal simile, the ingenious apologue, are all to be found in every few pages; while not unfrequently his figures, extending to a vast number of points of resemblance, and consisting not so much of one analogy as of a series and complication of analogies, run out into brief allegories. This is very frequently the case when he introduces them with the phrase, "so have I seen;" this is generally the signal for the reader to expect some very lengthened illustration. Thus, when speaking, in the beautiful sermon entitled, the "Return of Prayers," of certain causes which often mar the "good man's" supplications, he thus illustrates the effects of discomposure of spirit.

"For prayer is an action, and a state of intercourse and desire, exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek, up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hasty, and is full of mercy; prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier-garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. *For so have I seen* a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy Dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven."

Another instance of figure carried out into allegory occurs in the same sermon, when speaking of the elevated piety required in him who undertakes to intercede for others.

"For a man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks; but it could not water a poor man's garden: but so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then at the next time, when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all that stand round about may feel the shower. So is the good man's prayer; his own cup is full, it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessings, and all that drink of his cup and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys, and divide with him in his holy portions. And indeed he hath need of a great stock of piety, who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter, that every man needs for himself,—the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his omission of duties, and recessions from perfection,—and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plunderings and burning of his house by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live, and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts, and lend great portions to others! The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon, are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus."

Another instance of that extension and complication of figure of which we have been speaking, may be quoted from the sermon entitled, "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments; or, God's Method in curing Sinners." He is speaking of the mercy which often lies concealed under the severest judgments.

"What wisdom, and philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and blessings, cannot do, a mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of bold lust and imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowliness of a child, our revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore, God hath taken a course proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a cockatrice. And, therefore, observe how it is that God's mercy prevails over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but his judgments: for as when a famine had been in Israel in the days of Ahab for three years and a half, when the angry prophet Elijah met the king, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the prophet was

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most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautiful than when the sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the economy of the Divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with cypress and yew, 'and the mourners go about the streets,' this is nothing but the 'pompa misericordiæ,' this is the funeral of our sins, dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death; but the sight is refreshing as the beauties of the field which God had blessed, and the sounds are healthful as the voice of a physician."

But we might multiply instances of this kind without end. They will be found in almost all his "sermons," and in most of his practical works.

It cannot be denied, however, that though numberless instances of every *species* of figure are to be found in his writings, yet, that from peculiarities of mind which have been already noticed, and which will hereafter come more specifically under consideration, he is in *general* best pleased with the less compressed and energetic forms of illustration. His genius was abundantly more poetical and descriptive than oratorical; a fact which accounts not only for the general diffuseness and copiousness of diction, and the accumulation of epithets, but (the point we are now considering) for the fulness and amplitude of illustration in which he loves to indulge.

His tastes, in this respect, were any thing but severe. His ornaments are not plain and simple, but massive and costly, richly carved and enchased. His pictures are not mere outlines; a few hasty strokes, which leave much to the reader's imagination to fill up; they are all painted in the most finished manner, and coloured with the utmost splendour. It is curious to see how he very often adds what is, as respects the *sense*, a superfluous epithet or needless circumstance; not to render the analogy more complete, or the illustration more impressive; for in many of the instances now referred to, these purposes would be best answered by greater severity; but merely from his passion for description; to render it the more picturesque. To point out instances would be needless; they are to be met with in almost every page.

But though the imagination of Jeremy Taylor loves, it is true, to indulge in the utmost luxuriance of description, it is not meant that frequent instances may not be found, in which he has employed the most energetic metaphors with the most felicitous effect. Such are some of the brief and sparkling illustrations in which he will, now and then, convey important moral sentiments.—Such impressive apothegms, thus set, as it were, in gold, at once strike the attention, and, from their compactness, are easily retained in the memory. They are, if one may so speak, the jewels of philosophy, which she may always carry with her, possessing untold treasures of wisdom in the compass of a few sentences. Such is that beautiful expression, in which Taylor calls "chastity the enamel of the soul;" or that in which he describes "truth as the daughter of time;" or that in which, after condemning an excessive attention to curious but unprofitable speculation, he says, "not these matters, but practical are the hinges of immortality;" or that in which, when speaking of the all-pervading influence which religion should exercise over all the secular concerns of life, he tells us that such "a religion will reconcile Martha's employment with Mary's devotion."

It need not be said that an imagination, like that of Jeremy Taylor, was easily betrayed into extravagances. He is indeed almost proverbial for them; nor need we select specimens of faults, which are of but too frequent occurrence. Broken metaphors, and every form of exaggerated expression, (in numberless instances sinking into downright fustian and bombast,) are to be met with in most of his works. The same wondrous inequality which distinguishes the movements of every other faculty of his mind, eminently distinguished those of his imagination also.

Though there are few passages,—even those of the greatest beauty,—which are not alloyed by some faults of this kind, yet there are *some;* nor is it necessary to say, that these, which display all the riches of an imagination so transcendent without offending taste, breathe a spirit of almost superhuman eloquence. Such is the following brief passage, on "Prayer," from his beautiful little piece, entitled "Christian Consolations."

"But all that have a care to walk with God, fill their vessels more largely as soon as they rise, before they begin the work of the day, and before they lie down again at night; which is to observe what the Lord appointed in the Levitical ministry, a morning and an evening lamb to be laid upon the altar. So with them that are not stark irreligious, prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the skies drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass,—yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer, twice a day, is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall

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into a full shower of prayer; choose out the seasons in your own discretion, when prayer shall overflow, like Jordan in the time of harvest."

Of *wit* Jeremy Taylor appears to have possessed far more than he thought fit to employ. Whether this moderation resulted from the severity of his character, or from the gravity of the topics which, for the most part, employed his pen, or from both, we shall not determine. Even in his practical works we now and then meet with brief specimens of no ordinary wit; as when speaking of the besotting effects of habitual drunkenness, he observes, "that never since Joseph's cup was put into Benjamin's sack, was there a divining goblet." It is in his controversial pieces, however, and in his "Ductor Dubitantium," that his wit, as might be expected, most freely displays itself. The enormous errors of popery more especially he often exposes in a vein of very powerful irony. Take the following instance from his treatise on "Transubstantiation."

"By this doctrine of transubstantiation, the same thing is bigger and less than itself: for it is bigger in one host than in another; for the wafer is Christ's body, and yet one wafer is bigger than another: therefore Christ's body is bigger than itself. The same thing is above itself, and below itself, within itself, and without itself: it stands wholly upon his own right side, and wholly, at the same time, upon his own left side; it is as very a body, as that which is most divisible, and yet it is as indivisible as a spirit; and it is not a spirit but a body; and yet a body is no way separated from a spirit, but by being divisible. It is a perfect body, in which the feet are further from the head, than the head from the breast; and yet there is no space between head and feet at all: so that the parts are further off and nearer, without any distance at all; being further and not further, distant, and yet in every point. By this also here is magnitude without extension of parts; for if it be essential to magnitude to have 'partem extra partem,' that is, 'parts distinguished, and severally sited,' then where one part is, there another is not; and, therefore, the whole body of Christ is not in every part of the consecrated wafer; and yet if it be not, then it must be broken into parts, when the wafer is broken, and then it must fill his place by parts. But then it will not be possible, that a bigger body, with the conditions of a body, should be contained in a thing less than itself;—that a man may throw the house out at the windows: and if it be possible, that a magnitude should be in a point, and yet Christ's body be a magnitude, and yet in a point, then the same thing is in a point, and not in a point; extended, and not extended; great and not divisible; a quantity without dimension; something and nothing. By this doctrine, the same thing lies still and yet moves; it stays in a place and goes away from it; it removes from itself, and yet abides close by itself, and in itself, and out of itself; it is removed, and yet cannot be moved; broken, and cannot be divided; passes from east to west through a middle place, and yet stirs not; it is brought from heaven to earth, and yet is no where in the way, nor ever stirs out of heaven; it ceases to be where it was, and yet does not stir from thence, nor yet cease to be at all; it is removed at the motion of the accidents, and yet does not fall when the host falls; it changes his place, but falls not, and yet the changing of place was by falling. It supposes a body of Christ, which was made of bread, that is, 'Not born of the Virgin Mary;' it says, that Christ's body is there, without power of moving, or seeing, or hearing, or understanding; he can neither remember nor foresee, save himself from robbers or vermin, corruption or rottenness; it makes that which was raised in power, to be again sown in weakness; it gives to it the attribute of an idol, to have 'eyes and see not, ears and hear not, a nose and not to smell, feet and yet cannot walk.' It makes a thing contained bigger than the continent,—and all Christ's body to go into a part of his body; his whole head into his own mouth, if he did eat the eucharist, as it is probable he did, and certain that he might have done. These are the certain consequents of this most unreasonable doctrine, in relation to motion and quantity."

Again.

"By this doctrine, Christ's body is there where it was not before, and yet not by change of place, for it descends not;—nor by production, for it was produced before;—not by natural mutation, for Christ himself is wholly immutable, and though the bread be mutable, it can never become Christ. That which is now, and was always, begins to be; and yet it cannot begin, which was so long before. And by this doctrine is affirmed that, which even themselves judge to be simply and absolutely impossible. For if, after a thing hath his being, and during the first being, it shall have every day many new beginnings, without multiplying the beings, then the same thing is under two times at the same time; it is but a day old, and yet was six days ago, and six ages, and sixteen. The body of Christ obtains to be what it was not before, and yet it is wholly the same, without becoming what it was not. It obtains to be under the form of bread; and that which it is now and was not before, is neither perfective of his being, nor destructive, nor alterative, nor augmentative, nor diminutive, nor conservative. It is, as it were, a production, as it were a creation, as a conservation, as an adduction; that is, it is, as it were, just nothing; for it is not a creation, not a generation, not an adduction, not a conservation. It is not a conversion productive; for no new individual is produced. It is not a conversion conservative; that is a child of Bellarmine's: but it is perfect nonsense; for it is, as he says, a conversion, in which both the terms remain in the same place; that is, in which there are two things not converted, but not one that is; but it is a thing, of which there never was any example. But then if we ask what conversion it is? after a great many fancies and devices, contradicting each other, at last it is found to be 'adductive,'—and yet that 'adductive' does not change the place, but signifies a substantial change; and yet adduction is no substantial change, but accidental; and yet this change is not accidental, but adductive and substantial. 'O rem ridiculam, Cato, et jocosam!'"

The reader shall be presented with two other brief specimens from the "Ductor Dubitantium;" they are given rather because they are of convenient length, than because they are the most striking that might be selected. The following is the humorous manner in which he exposes the contradictions and absur-

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dities into which the Roman canon lawyers have fallen, in their absurd extensions of the prohibited degrees in marriage.

" These laws were made by time and accidents, and were extended or contracted as it pleased the popes of Rome, who (as one observes) were, for a long time, 'iniquiores et invidi in maritos,' apt and easy to make all restraints upon marriages. If it were seasonable and fit, it were not useless to observe many instances out of the canon law to this purpose. But I forbear; that which I now observe, is, that the prohibition amongst them began with cousins-german; then it went to the third and fourth degrees; then to seven; then to four again; sometimes to six, as in the synod at Cabaillon; sometimes 'usque dum generatio agnoscitur, aut memoria retinetur,' 'as long as any memory of kindred remains;'—and that will be very far in Wales, where they reckon eight degrees and special names of kindred after cousins-german, and then kin for ever: and truly these canonists proceed as reasonably as their principles would admit. For if cognation or consanguinity was the hinderance of marriage, wherever they could reckon that, they had some pretence to forbid marriage: but if they only forbade it upon the accounts of nature, or by the precedent of the Divine law given to Moses, they were to stop there where nature stopped, or the Divine law. But that they would not, as knowing it to be an easy thing to make laws at the charge of other men's trouble.

The reasons why the projectors of the canon law did forbid to the fourth or to the seventh degree, were as fit a cover for this dish as could be imagined. They that were for four, gave this grave reason for it: 'There are four humours in the body of a man, to which, because the four degrees of consanguinity do answer, it is proportionable to nature to forbid the marriage of cousins to the fourth degree.' Nay more; 'there are four elements;' ergo, to which it may be added, that there are upon a man's hand four fingers and a thumb. The thumb is the 'stirps' or common parent; and to the end of the four fingers, that is, the four generations of kindred, we ought not to marry, because 'the life of a man is but a span long.'—There are also four quarters of the world; and indeed so there are of every thing in it, if we please, and therefore abstain at least till the fourth degree be past. Others who are graver and wiser (particularly Bonaventure) observe cunningly, that 'besides the four humours of the body, there are three faculties of the soul, which being joined together, make seven, and they point out to us that men are to abstain till the seventh generation.' These reasons, such as they are, they therefore were content withal, because they had no better: yet upon the strength of these they were bold, even against the sense of almost all mankind, to forbid these degrees to marry.

The following is a striking and humorous mode of representing the impossibility, that the common people should ever understand the frivolous subtleties by which the Romish doctors vainly attempt to defend the abomination of image worship.

" And here for the common people to discern the niceties, and the intricate nothings, that their learned men have devised, to put a vizor upon this folly, is so impossible, that it will not be easy to make them understand the terms, though a learned man were by them at every cringe they make. They cannot tell whether the worship be to the image or the exemplar; which is prime and which is secondary; they cannot distinguish of 'latria,' and 'dulia,' and 'hyperdulia;' nor can they skill in proper or improper worship, mediate and immediate, univocal, equivocal, and analogical, nor say how much is for this, and how much for that, or which is simple and which is allayed, which is absolute and which is reductive. And although men in the schools, and when they have nothing to do but to make distinctions which nobody can understand, can separate word from word, form from matter, real from notional, the shadow from the body, a dream from a vision, the skin from the flesh, and the flesh from the bone,—yet when they come to action, and clothe their theorems with a body of circumstances, he that attends the present business of devotion and desire, will not find himself able or at leisure then to distinguish curiously; and therefore it was well said of Hesselius of Louvain;—'Images were brought into use for the sake of the laity, and now for their sakes they are to be removed again, lest they give Divine worship to the image, or fall into the heresy of the Anthropomorphites:' (he might have added,) 'or lest by worshipping God by an image, they commit the sin of superstition and idolatry, breaking the second commandment.' For the same folly, which in the heathens, was reproved by the primitive christians, the same is done now-a-days, by christians to their images. I shall conclude this with a story out of an Italian, who wrote commentaries of the affairs of India:—When the poor barbarians of Nova Hispania, in the kingdom of Mexico, had, one day, of a sudden found their idols taken down and broken, they sent four principal persons of their country to Alphonso Zuasus, the licentiate, who had commanded it; they complaining of the injury, supposed also, and told him they believed it to be done without his consent and knowledge, as knowing that christians had idols and images of their own, whom they valued, and adored, and worshipped; and looking up, and espying the image of St. Sebastian, whom Alfonsus had in great veneration, hanging by his bed-side, they pointed at him with their finger, saying, the same regard which he had to the image of St. Sebastian, the same they had to theirs. The governor being troubled with this quick and not barbarous discourse, turned him about a little, and at last told them, that the christians did not worship images for their own sakes, but as they represented holy persons dwelling in heavenly places; and, to demonstrate that, took down the image of St. Sebastian, and broke it in pieces. They replied that it was just so with them; and that they were not so stupid to worship the images for their own regards, but as they represented the sun and moon, and all the lights of heaven. Alfonsus being yet more troubled, was forced to change the state of the question, by saying that the object was differing, though the manner was not; that the christians did, by their images, pass honour to the great Creator of the world; but they did it to creatures, to evil spirits, and false gods: which was indeed very true, but it was a removing the question from the second commandment to the first. For, although, in relation to the first, the heathens have the worst of it; yet as to the second, these christians and the poor Indians were equal: and the wit of man cannot tell how they differ."

It is observable, however, that the *wit* of Jeremy Taylor is almost always tempered by good-nature, and an all-pervading spirit of charity. Biting sarcasm or severe satire is rarely found in his writings. His wit is like the harmless lightning which often plays in the summer-evening sky; not that which blasts and scathes as well as shines.

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Of the immeasurable *learning* of Jeremy Taylor, incidental mention has been already made when estimating the influence which, in conjunction with other causes, it exerted on his powers of reasoning and imagination. And the wonder is that that influence should not have been far greater; that his mind should have retained so large a measure of its native elasticity as it did, under such enormous masses of erudition. Half the same quantity of learning would have suffocated the intellect of most men. Nay, the mere time expended in its acquisition would have left little leisure to the generality of mankind for the independent exercise of their own faculties. It is no small proof of the astonishing energy and power of Taylor's mind, that he should have been able to breathe and move at all under such corpulence of learning. The feats he performs under such circumstances reminds one of the achievements of the knights of chivalry, whose enormous weapons and massive armour would seem, at first sight, altogether unmanageable to men of merely mortal mould.

But while we may justly wonder that he had strength to wield such a mass of learning with any degree of facility, we can be as little surprised that even *he* should often be overborne by it. In the education and discipline of intellect, nothing is of more importance than to take care that the quantity of aliment shall be duly proportioned to the powers of digestion, and that the latter shall be strengthened as the former is increased. In this way, and in this only, can intellectual repletion be guarded against; and the mind, not merely provided with proper materials to operate upon, but rendered capable of using them. To digest, to arrange, to consolidate our knowledge, to render it fit for use, and to fit the mind for using it, demand as much time as the accumulation of knowledge; and more labour.

The ill effects which Jeremy Taylor's erudition often produced, have been already necessarily adverted to in a previous part of this Essay. In the first place, the mere accumulation of it left not sufficient time for the full development of his powers of reasoning, or for the adequate cultivation of his taste, or for systematically digesting his vast acquisitions. In addition to all this, it induced, in many instances, an excessive reverence for antiquity and precedent. It led him to acquiesce in many arguments supplied by his learning, which the independent and sober exercise of his own judgment would have rejected. It very frequently led to a childishly credulous assent to the merest fables, as grave matter of fact;* and what was worse than all, it led to an excessive copiousness of diction, and the introduction of an immensity of extraneous matter in most of his trains of reasoning. In a word, as already stated, there was but one faculty of his mind, that completely defied its influence;—his imagination. This existed in such plenitude and vigour, that even erudition like his could not bury it; it merely gathered fresh nourishment from the soil, struck its roots the wider and the deeper, and shot out branches in more luxuriant vigour.

Almost every kind of learning appears to have been cultivated by Jeremy Taylor, with nearly equal assiduity, if we may judge by the utterly worthless kind of books he often quotes. The strange want of taste and discrimination, which has so frequently been stated as the distinguishing peculiarity of his character, seems to have marked him here also. His appetite for knowledge was voracious; and like other voracious appetites, it was far from fastidious. It was a sort of intellectual *bulimia;* nothing came amiss to it; luxuries and carrion, sumptuous food and broken victuals, classical delicacies and the coarsest fare of the cloister and the schools, were all devoured with nearly equal eagerness, and digested apparently with nearly equal ease. He was not only familiarly acquainted with the whole range of classical literature—poets, orators, historians, and philosophers; with the civil and ecclesiastical history of all ages and nations; with all the principal fathers both of the Eastern and Western churches, and with the voluminous writings of the schoolmen, but he appears to have read a vast number of books, and fragments of books, on all sorts of subjects,—and more especially of martyrology, and monkish legends; while he had devoured an immensity of books of Romish casuistry and devotion. In addition to all this, he was very extensively versed in the philosophers

* This remark may be illustrated by the following observations of Bishop Heber. "Taylor's appetite for the marvellous may seem to have been sufficiently indiscriminate, when, in the same sentence, he refers, without the least apparent hesitation, to two such monstrous stories as those of the Egyptian Thebes, with its houses of alabaster, spotted with gold, and the city of Quinsay, with fourscore millions of inhabitants. It seems, however, to have been the common practice of writers in his time to assume as facts, for the purposes of argument, any thing which suited their turn, and for which a single authority could be given. I know scarcely any instance in which they have appeared to distinguish between the weight of different testimonies, or to make any difference in their manner of citing circumstances alleged by writers of different ages. If a fact were found recorded in any ancient historian, they received it without question, how small soever the means of acquiring information which that historian may have possessed, or however great the internal evidence of his credulity or mendacity." These observations are in the main correct, yet it can hardly be denied that Taylor possessed a more easy faith than most of his contemporaries.

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of the day, such as they were, both physical and metaphysical. It is true, circumstances led him to cultivate some branches of learning more sedulously than others; yet to judge by the countless books he quotes on all subjects, one would be almost led to imagine that such determination of his taste was accidental. A vast number of the books he quotes are, it may be safely said, totally unknown, even by name, to the vast majority of *well-informed* modern readers.

And as few men have possessed such a measure of curious and various learning, so none assuredly, even of his age, prevalent as the fashion then was of advertising one's learning in "marginal stuffings," as Milton terms them, made a more prodigal display of it. In some of his pages there cannot be much less than a score of quotations, or learned allusions. This has often subjected him to the chargé of pedantry; and if by pedantry be meant merely an unnecessary and absurd display of learning, then he is, no doubt, pedantic enough; but if, as is generally the case, it be meant to imply affectation or ostentatious vanity, then the charge can hardly be admitted to be true. Neither need his defence be rested simply on the universal custom of his age; for it must be granted that he far outsteps the license even of that wild age; but on this consideration,—that if ever there was a mind simple and unsophisticated, it was that of Jeremy Taylor. His lavish display of his learning arose purely from habit, and it may be added, from his forgetting,—a forgetfulness into which learned men are but too apt to fall,—that others were not quite so learned as himself.

Nothing, it may be admitted, can be more ludicrous than the exhibition which his erudition frequently makes; especially in his sermons, and his practical works. In such works his plain hearers and his plain readers may well be surprised to find him speaking of hard students "being as mute as the Seriphian frogs;" or of "clear and brisk discourse being as refreshing as the air of Campanian wines;" or of its being "necessary to some men to have garments made of the Calabrian fleece, and stained with the blood of the *murex*;" or "of the wrath of Susa," or of "the garments stained with the Tyrian fish;" or of the "tender lard of the Apulian swine." Yet such phrases as these are of perpetual occurrence.*

Such is the activity of the suggesting faculty, that the most common-place sentiment, the most trivial truism, is often accompanied by a body-guard of several parallel passages. Points which no man ever thought of disputing, Jeremy Taylor hardly thinks safe, except under the protection of half a dozen learned authorities.

In quotation for the mere purpose of *illustration*, he is often inaccurate; either fixing the citation on a wrong author, or completely altering the meaning of the passage. Some curious instances of this are given by Mr. Pitman in the late edition of his works, which we quote for the amusement of the reader.

"Bishop Taylor's very lax mode of referring to classical authors is specified, more than once, in the latter volumes of this edition. To the instances there adduced, and to others which the classical reader will discover, may be added the two following: 1. Arrian, ridiculing those who affect the stiff appearance and gait of philosophers, contemptuously asks, 'Why do you strut about, as if you had swallowed a *spit*?' Τί οὖν ἡμῖν ὀβελίσκον κατατιὼν περιπατεῖς; which Bishop Taylor (vol. v. p. 518) renders, 'We walk by the *obelisk*, and meditate in piazzas.'—2. 'Some nations used to *eat* the bodies of their friends (vol. iv. p. 567):' Bishop Taylor thus assigns to the *relations* the office, which Cicero (to whom he alludes) describes as performed by *dogs*. (Tusc. Q. i. 45.)"

This occasional inaccuracy, however, is only seen where he quotes merely for purposes of illustration. In quotations which seriously affect his argument, he is generally exceedingly careful and accurate. Some singular proofs of this may be seen in the "Second Part" of his "Dissuasive from Popery." He there shows his great superiority to his Romish antagonists, in intimate knowledge of the fathers and of ecclesiastical antiquity generally.

In these parts of his writings, he affords evidence that his learning was throughout genuine and solid; that he was no index hunter, as were many of the pedants of his day; many of whom, there is reason to believe, by their ingenious artifices, frequently sustained a considerable reputation for learning with a very small outlay of diligence. This praise is justified by the fact that he has adduced many citations, of the very existence of which his adversaries were utterly ignorant; several of which they denied were to be found in the authors to whom he imputed them; while some few they more than insinuated that he had manufactured for the occasion, "judging of others," as he tells us, "by the known practices of their own party." These quotations, he shows, were what they purported to be, and were to be found in the most correct editions of the works to which they were referred, though often dragged from the depths of such inaccessible recesses, and brought from sources so remote, that a mind less excursive and indefatigable than his own, had little

* Such allusions are perhaps most abundant in the Sermons on the "House of Feasting;" the "Apples of Sodom;" and the "Marriage Ring;" while long quotations and scraps of Greek and Latin are in every page.

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chance of finding them. As many of these passages were of the last importance in this controversy, and were, for *that very reason*, struck out of the expurgated indices of the Romish church, and sometimes out of the text of those mutilated editions which that church had put forth, nothing but the profoundest learning could have enabled him to find them. To obtain some of his testimonies, he *must*, in many cases, have disembowelled the contents of many a bulky folio.

So stuffed is Jeremy Taylor's page sometimes with quotations from ancient authors,—poets, historians, philosophers, fathers, schoolmen, that it is impossible to find a single smooth, unbroken sentence. Pursued to this extent, and often for such unimportant purposes, the frequency of quotation, in many places, becomes a positive nuisance. Awkward formalities of quotation and strange names are perpetually interrupting the quiet course of thought, which flowing languidly over pages bestrewed with a thousand fragments of ancient erudition, remind one of those American rivers, whose sluggish waters it is said are half choked with the decaying foliage of unnumbered autumns.

Indeed such was Jeremy Taylor's familiarity with ancient literature, so deeply had it imbued his mind and all his habits of thought and expression, that he might be almost said to have lived in antiquity. Of the effect this circumstance had on his style and phraseology, there will be a better opportunity of speaking presently, when we come to make a remark or two on those subjects. It may be observed here, however, that his intimate and profound acquaintance with ancient learning, had an influence as striking in his habits of thought, as on his style. Not only is it true, as Bishop Heber remarks, that Taylor often contents himself with a mere allusion to some obscure fact or opinion, with which he takes it for granted his reader is as well acquainted as himself; and not only does he use words of foreign *derivation* in their foreign *sense*, and coins numberless new ones fresh from the Latin language, but he will often formally state and refute, in the midst of reasonings of great and universal importance, some absurd and long since entombed heresy, which no man has probably embraced for centuries; or some fantastic fable of the Jewish Rabbins; or some grave folly he has met with in his books of saintly legends; and then, after spending half a page on it, he will judiciously declare it unworthy of attention.* So absurdly do these things sometimes break in on the continuity of thought,—more especially where they ought to have been most carefully kept out, we mean in his sermons,—that, with a full admission of the eccentricity of his mind, and with a deep persuasion of the inequality with which it exerted itself, the reader can hardly help supposing that he often forgot that the antiquated errors he so gravely explodes, were now perfectly innocuous; and that the follies against which he inveighs, were nothing but phantoms which his own active imagination had evoked from the dead. The strenuousness with which he now and then contends against these dim shades of long departed heresies, reminds one of the inimitable description of the country parson, in the "Sketch Book," to whom, "shut up among worm-eaten tomes in the retirement of his antiquated study, the pages of old times were as the gazettes of the day."

The powers of acquisition with which Jeremy Taylor was gifted, must have been such as have fallen to very few men. His memory must have been almost preternaturally retentive and vigorous. Yet even in this respect, too, he displays the same strange and capricious irregularity, of which there has already been such frequent occasion to speak. While it was capable of tenaciously retaining such a vast accumulation of multifarious and curious learning, much of it from authors whose very names, and from works the very titles of which, would have been an insupportable burden to many minds, it is not uncommon to find him unaccountably oblivious in matters of the simplest nature: for instance, he sometimes makes the most glaring mistakes in the facts of scripture history, a book with every part of which Jeremy Taylor in general shows himself most laudably acquainted. Thus in one instance, noticed by Bishop Heber, he says, "We should fight as Gideon did with three hundred hardy brave fellows, that would stand against all violence, rather than to make a noise with rams' horns and *broken pitchers* like the men at the siege of Jericho!" —In another place we find him representing Joseph as having been sold into the hands of the merchants of *Amalek*, instead of Midian.

The style of Jeremy Taylor now demands a few observations. Of Jeremy Taylor (as of many of the celebrated writers of the seventeenth century) it may be observed, there is often a striking disparity between the *materials* of his style and its structure. As to the former, his vocabulary possessed all the compass, the variety, the richness, which might be expected from an imagination so inventive and splendid, united to erudition so extensive and profound; while, at the same time, the structure of the sentences is often exceed-

* See some remarkable specimens of this in the *third part* of the solemn sermon on "Christ's Advent to Judgment," and in his "Life of Christ," *passim*.

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ingly rugged, and deficient in harmony. There are, it is true, innumerable passages which are even in these respects faultless; but to this topic we shall revert again when we have made a few remarks on the separate elements of his style.

Whatever deficiencies may be found in the writers of that age, in point of harmony and polish, it is to them we must, after all, look for the real opulence and power of the English language. They made it what it is; they first accumulated that wealth which has rendered it so copious. In the rich vein of their writings, we must look for that which it was left to succeeding ages to purify and refine, and to work up into all that is rare and beautiful in composition. They were the founders of the family; they accumulated our patrimony; they left us our rich inheritance. So long as a language is unsettled, so long, of course, it will invite constant accession, and afford the largest facilities for it; and it *will be* unsettled so long as a nation is very rapidly advancing in knowledge and intelligence; it must, therefore, receive accessions adequate to the new exigencies of thought. The prohibitory laws of criticism against innovations in language, (always of very limited authority and influence,) must, like all other prohibitory laws, be totally ineffectual, till the language has resources within itself at least sufficient to provide for the *necessities* of thought, and in some measure to satisfy luxury too. The application of the severer canons of criticism and taste presuppose a language, not only formed, but settled, and to a considerable extent copious; just as grammar presupposes a language of some kind or other.

The first thing intellect demands is adequate expression, and if the poverty of a language will not supply it, men will seek it from foreign sources. If there are no manufactures of home growth, they will import artificial textures from abroad. They justly think that the most outlandish garb is better than nakedness, and that, though we may tarry for polish and elegance, our necessities must be supplied at once. Thus, till a language is at least equal to all the more pressing exigencies of thought, writers will defy all the restraints of a minute and superficial criticism. Such criticism ought not to prevail, even if it were possible; and, indeed, it is not possible it should even if it ought.

Thus, whenever the writers of the seventeenth century—that memorable era in which the human mind suddenly outgrew the scantiness of language, and knowledge increased with a rapidity altogether unprecedented—found terms which more exactly expressed their meaning, or were more energetic, impressive, or brilliant than those which the as yet straitened vocabulary of their own tongue supplied, they did not hesitate instantly to appropriate and anglicise them; often, it is true, with such slight alterations and so little regard to the analogies of the language into which they were naturalized, that the words themselves indicated, in their very appearance, their foreign origin.

So extensive were these importations, that there are comparatively few terms of much force or beauty that are not to be found in some rough shape or other in the works of writers of the first half of the seventeenth century. The great task of succeeding ages has not been to accumulate; there was abundance of unwrought metal already in their possession; it was to purify, to polish; to reject the ore that would not pay for the refining labours of the furnace, and to mould the terms they reserved and consecrated to perpetual use, into greater harmony with the general analogies of the language; to file off asperities, to abolish awkward terminations and inflections, superfluous syllables and every species of redundance, and to impress on the whole language greater grace and elegance, ease and beauty. It is to the elder writers, however, we must look, as the great benefactors of the language.

Of this license of innovation, as might be suspected from one so thoroughly tinctured with ancient learning as was Jeremy Taylor, he availed himself to the utmost; so much so, indeed, that not only are many words of his manufacture now totally obsolete, but in all probability were never used except by himself, and even then only once. The simple fact is, his mind was so imbued with classical and ancient literature, that, as we have already stated, he might be almost said to *think* in a foreign language as much as in his own, and consequently, while he has adopted many terms as forcible and beautiful as they were new, he has indulged in this license of innovation far beyond the demands of necessity. The following, among many others, which we have noticed in perusing his works, we cite in illustration of the above remarks.* "Funest" for "sad;" "effigiate" for "conform;" "respersed" for "scattered;" "deturpated" for "deformed;" "deordination" for "confusion;" "clancularly" for "secretly;" "rate" for "ratified;" "ferity" for "fierceness;" "correption"† for "rebuke;" "immorigerous" for "disobedient;" "flexures"‡

* Perhaps there is hardly any writer, except Sir Thomas Brown, who has indulged in this practice to an equal extent.

† "Faith in Christ—hope of eternal life—fraternal *correption*."

‡ "Prudent and wise *flexures*."

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in the sense of "compliances;" "intenerate" * for "render soft." These instances might easily be multiplied.

But his familiarity with Greek and Latin leads him, in numberless cases, beyond this; he not only uses foreign words before unknown to the language, merely giving them an *anglicised* form and termination, but he very frequently uses words of foreign derivation, already appropriated to a different meaning, in their original or foreign sense. The following are a few specimens:—"Immured" † as an active verb for "encompassed;" "remarked" for "rendered remarkable;" ‡ "extant" in the sense of "standing out;" § "insolent" for "unusual;" ‖ "irritation" for "making void;" ¶ "contrition" for a "bruise." ** Many more such instances might be adduced if it were necessary, but these specimens, it is presumed, will be sufficient.

To the above may be added one which Bishop Heber has noted, and which has a most ludicrous air;—"excellent" for "surpassing." In this sense of the word, Taylor in one place speaks of an "*excellent* pain."

To the same cause—his being so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the classic writers as to adopt unconsciously their habits of thoughts and their style of expression—are to be attributed many of the bold and unusual combinations of phrase we so often meet with in his writings; belonging rather to the idioms and laws of other languages than of that in which he wrote; some of them, indeed, we should expect to find only in the choruses of the Greek tragedians, and they are scarcely to be justified any where else. Such, for instance, is the expression, that "slander, like an earwig, creeps into the ear, and makes a *diseased noise* and a *scandalous murmur*."

Amongst these peculiarities of style may be also mentioned Jeremy Taylor's frequent use of the abstract and the concrete, or of bold metaphorical phrases and sober general terms within the same clause, as well as his frequently qualifying his substantives not by simple adjectives, but by the use of other substantives, expressing the force of them in the abstract. The following instances will convey a slight idea of our meaning:—"Prevents the rivulet from swelling *into rivers and a vastness;*" "it makes a fraction of the species by *incrassation and a shadow;*" "it is confined into a *prison of darkness and a cloud;*" "is changed into the *scorchings and little images* of hell;" "it is just in God to seal the *cisterns and little emanations* of the creatures from thee;" "being thrown from his *pride and attempt* of passing towards the seat of the stars." But such expressions as these might be multiplied without end. We are aware that in presenting them in this dislocated form, we are hardly doing Taylor justice. Seen in their connexion, and rendered familiar by frequent perusal of the writings of this great man, they often strike the mind as exceedingly beautiful and expressive.

Another peculiarity of Jeremy Taylor's style which may be noticed, is the liberty which he takes in forming plurals. Many of the writers of his day used, it is true, considerable latitude; yet few went his length. "Strengths," "dissolutions," "prudencies," "aversenesses," are such as few would have thought themselves justified in employing.

In this enumeration of Jeremy Taylor's more striking idiomatical peculiarities, it would be unpardonable not to mention his very frequent use of the comparative degree without the *forms* of comparison. This form is often exceedingly striking; as in the expression, "so when a Libyan tiger drawn from his *wilder* foragings." Such expressions are of perpetual occurrence.

These peculiarities, taken together, make up much of what are usually called Jeremy Taylor's extravagances of style, and which are so often imputed to the eccentricities of his ungovernable imagination. This, when the peculiarities are merely those of style and expression, appears to us erroneous. Such peculiarities, in by far the greater number of instances, are rather to be imputed to his having so completely imbibed the manner and air of his classical models. The idiom is often purely Greek and Latin, not English. Now, however repulsive such peculiarities may justly be, viewed simply in relation to the laws of that language in which Jeremy Taylor wrote, they are by no means altogether displeasing to one

* "*Intenerate* the stubborn pavement."

† "And when God had given himself a name, and *immured* it with dread and reverence."

‡ "With which God hath *remarked* your family and person."

§ "All sorts of representations, (speaking of the prohibition of images of God,) flat or *extant*, painted or carved."

‖ "But these (speaking of certain rare instances) are *insolent* examples."

¶ "But they may not violate them by *irritation*."

** The use of this word is, in one instance, exceedingly ludicrous: "For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from *contrition* or a bruise."

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who has formed a strong taste for classical literature. In the eyes of such a man, the style of Jeremy Taylor

" Is rich with barbaric pearls and gold; "

and though he would be sorry to see such license taken by writers in general, he is willing to extend his indulgence to this remarkable genius, the eccentricity of whose thoughts seems to harmonize with the fantastic garb in which he has dressed them; not to say that this transfusion of the idiom of the Greek and Latin into our own language, serves to give the enthusiast in the classics a more vivid idea and a clearer perception of the peculiarities he has so often admired in the great writers of antiquity.

Though there is no part of our copious language of which Jeremy Taylor was not master, yet his profound and intimate acquaintance with the learned languages, leaves little room for surprise that his style should be characterized by a much larger infusion of words of Greek and Latin origin than of Saxon. There is a striking difference, in this respect, between him and an equally celebrated contemporary; of one, who though equally imbued with a love of classical literature, possessed, at the same time, unrivalled command over our expressive vernacular. The fact is, that Milton was far better acquainted than Jeremy Taylor with the early English literature,—with such writers as Chaucer, Spencer, and Shakspeare.

Though the style of Jeremy Taylor is characterized by so large an infusion of classical idioms, it is a fact that the *structure* of his sentences is far less Latinistic and involved than that of most of the great writers of his own or of a preceding age; far less so than that of Bacon or Hooker, Milton or Barrow. Indeed it may be generally affirmed that they are constructed in a very simple manner, and in a great majority of instances have in this respect nothing to offend the ear even of the most fastidious modern reader. Though his sentences are often very long, yet each clause has a distinct meaning independent of the rest, and is joined to the others by the simplest connectives. His favourite, and by far most common, mode is to connect them by the copulative conjunction, " and." Take the following brief specimen out of a vast number which might be easily collected from his writings.

" But when christian religion was planted, and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now ' angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord;' and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to co-operate, as with an united design, to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution, is made rich by religion; and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things: and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is, that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficients, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance, and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire, and great interest is, by all means, to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend, in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to religion, to the good of the catholic church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooses."

In this simple structure of sentences, as well as in many other respects, Jeremy Taylor's style remarkably resembles that of Chrysostom. Nor were these the only or the most important points in which these wonderful men were like each other.

We remark that Jeremy Taylor's frequent use of archaisms and of classical idiom impairs scarcely at all the simply English *structure* of his style. Of this it would be easy to accumulate instances. The following from his beautiful sermon, entitled " The Mercy of the Divine Judgment, or God's Method of curing Sinners," (as well as many of the extracts which have been already made, may serve) to illustrate these observations. The passage is as musical, and as full of rhythm, as the smoothest that could be selected from the pages of the most accomplished modern writer.

"At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons: the second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendant labours. But when the christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people: ' I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.' So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much

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are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and 'in the cross of the Lord Jesus.' Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away."

As a preacher it may be safely affirmed, that Jeremy Taylor's genius was too poetical to permit him to obtain the very highest excellence. Great reputation it is true he could not but obtain; unbounded admiration and applause would necessarily wait on eloquence so sublime as his. Still if the severe principles of rhetoric be applicable at all to the pulpit, as they undoubtedly are,—if eloquence *there*, as in the senate or at the bar, be considered as the great instrument of *conviction* and *persuasion*, then there can hardly be a doubt, that whatever the rank Jeremy Taylor is fairly entitled to hold, it is less than that of some other celebrated preachers. Regarded in this point of view, he was far too *imaginative*.

It will be observed that we are not now speaking of the mere vices of style or manner, superinduced by circumstances or education; vices which were not so much his own, as those of the age in which he lived, and from which, therefore, scarcely any one was free. We are not speaking of the quaint conceits, the frivolous distinctions, the misapplied learning, the needless subdivisions, the quantities of learned quotation, with which his sermons abound; we are speaking of his genius for oratory *abstractedly*, and in relation to its original structure and native tendencies. Thus regarded, the excess of the poetical temperament is at once apparent. He delights in luxuriant description and ample illustration *for their own sake*; he never thinks of employing his imagination, as the orator always should, merely within the limits most likely to subserve the great practical purpose of oratory. And what is that object? It is not, like that of poetry, to please, to amuse, or even to instruct, alone; nor indeed at all, except in subordination to a higher end: its object is to convince and persuade, and to convince for the very purpose of persuasion. The eloquence of the orator is always practical; and has ever an important practical result in view. It follows from this, that the consummate orator will employ all the faculties of his mind, strictly with reference to this end; every thing in the shape of argument or of illustration, will be sternly subordinated to it. If this be the case, the imagination, like every other faculty, will of course be subjected to the same discipline and control, and will never be permitted to transgress those limits within which alone it can conduce to the proposed end. And if it be thus regulated, if it be thus constantly rendered subservient to ends higher than those of delight and pleasure, it will be always employed with moderation. Let us judge of this matter by those unerring practical maxims which nature inspires, and which we instinctively adopt in common life. When *really* intent on gaining some important object, when *really* under the influence of impassioned feeling, though the mind will often give utterance to deep emotion by figurative, aye, the most figurative language, it will never seek expression in far-fetched, ingenious, or prolonged similitudes. It is not in nature to do so. Such conduct would argue a coolness, a premeditation, a self-possession of mind, totally at variance with intense emotion, and would in general inevitably give the lie to every pretension to it. The imagination, therefore, so far as employed at all, will be employed to render argument more perspicuous or striking by appropriate illustration, and, within certain just limits, even to adorn it; that is, where the pleasure it imparts may be made directly subservient to the great purpose of persuasion: but even then the true orator will let it appear that it is subsidiary, and not principal; that it is his servant, not his master. When it flashes, it will flash like the lightning, to consume, and not to play in the heavens like the beautiful meteors of a northern sky. Its exhibition, therefore, will be uniformly characterized far more by force than by beauty, by energy than by elegance; and will be restrained within the compressed forms of metaphor, never permitted to expand into the luxuriance of prolonged or laboured simile.

The success of the few who have obtained the highest rank as orators, and we may also add the comparative failure of the many, who have, notwithstanding, been justly accounted, in a subordinate sense, very eloquent, go to prove that the chief elements of the most effective eloquence, that is, of the eloquence which is most likely to *persuade*, are—vigorous reasoning, animated by intense passion, and that a profuse employment of the imagination is absolutely unfriendly to the orator's real object. Such is the character of that eloquence, which, of all that has been uttered, is alone entitled to be denominated *perfect*;—we mean that of Demosthenes. It may be granted, indeed, that the exuberance of an excessive imagination

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will often procure for the orator more admiration and more enthusiastic demonstrations of applause, than the most successful efforts of a more practical eloquence, and consequently render a speaker in one sense more *popular*. But then it is to be considered that so far as the *professed* end of the orator is concerned,—the actual persuasion of his audience to a certain course of conduct,—all this is a very questionable test of his skill. This loud applause of his rhetorical qualities may be utterly worthless, nay in many instances absolutely detrimental; for it not unfrequently happens that while they have been admiring *him*, they are farther than ever from being suitably impressed with the truth and importance of the sentiments he has been inculcating, simply because their exclusive admiration of the *speaker* has had direct tendency to withdraw their attention from his subject. They have been attending a *spectacle;* they expected, they sought their end in the delight they should enjoy there: it will be admitted they have been very well amused; but it is now all over, and they are retiring to their homes, and to the serious business of life, and—as when retiring from the theatre—their first object is to forget what they have heard.

There may be, it is true, much dispute as to what constitutes an excessive use of the imagination in the orator; it may be justly contended that much will depend on circumstances; on the character of the times, on the habits of the audience, on certain intellectual peculiarities of the speaker. All this may be admitted without impairing the general truth of the preceding remarks; and general truth is all that is here contended for. Accordingly, it may be said, that whenever the prevailing feeling of an auditor, *at the time* he is listening to a speaker, would give utterance to itself in such words as these; "that is fine," "that is a beautiful illustration," "that is an ingenious thought," "that is a brilliant expression," there, however the auditor may admire the *man*, the *orator* has failed of his object; the audience are *really* doing homage to the speaker's powers only when they feel that what he is uttering is important truth, and are silently resolving to act upon it. An intense and overpowering interest in the subject, and a subsequent conduct influenced by what they have heard, or, at all events, resolutions that they *will* adopt such conduct,—these form the most conclusive test of the orator's eloquence. Success is his highest praise.

Not that the orator need fear that, if successful after this uninviting fashion, he will be defrauded of his fame, even though the audience, at the time he is addressing them, may not have a thought to waste on him. Yet, alas! it is this fear which in so many instances is the secret of false and ambitious eloquence; of an injudicious, and, if the orator be a preacher, the criminal attempt to employ to an undue extent those qualities, which shall fix admiration immediately on the speaker. To act thus is to abandon the substance to grasp at a shadow.—But though the orator need not fear lest he should be defrauded of his fame, it will not flow in upon him *at the very moment* of his success; it is a reversionary possession: it is when he has effected his object, when the excitement of his audience has subsided, when they have been induced to act, or at least have *resolved* to act as he would have them, it is then, by making his eloquence the subject of distinct reflection or analysis, it is then that his powers will be felt and his merits appreciated.

The great principle which should regulate every orator in the general management of his powers, is, as we have already observed, best illustrated by the manner of men in ordinary life, when, little thinking that they are sustaining the character or performing the office of *orators*, they are sincerely and deeply anxious to persuade their neighbour to some important course of conduct; to perform some urgent duty, or confer some much needed benefit. The man, it is true, may want many of the qualifications of which undoubtedly no public speaker should be destitute; he may want education, copiousness of language, and correctness of style. Still, how does he unconsciously exemplify, in his conduct, all the great principles which ought to actuate the orator,—and which did actuate Demosthenes! How does he select just those arguments which in his opinion will be likely to prevail, and abstain from all of a questionable, or even useless character! With what impassioned earnestness, with what simplicity,—the infallible evidence of sincerity,—does he express them! If, as is likely when under the influence of intense emotion, he expresses himself figuratively, how few, how condensed such expressions are! All must have had opportunities of seeing *practical* illustrations, more or less striking, of these remarks.

But suppose all this reversed; suppose the conduct either of the too philosophical, or of the too imaginative orator, (who it must be recollected, profess to have precisely the same objects in view, only on a larger scale,) should be adopted in private life. If, for instance, a man, who wished to obtain an important benefit from another, instead of taking for granted that the same passions and sympathies, the same principles of action, dwelt in the bosom of his neighbour as in his own; instead of selecting those practical arguments which suggest themselves from the relations in which the parties stood to one another,

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should enter into certain lengthened, refined, elaborate, and it may be metaphysical arguments,* to prove that benevolence is a duty; and after having thus proved what the man never doubted, (who in fact was only in doubt as to whether in this particular case he was called to exercise benevolence or not,) he should treat him to some elaborate disquisition on the sublimity of those principles he inculcates; and what is at least as bad as all the rest, express the whole of this edifying harangue, in the language of a florid and extravagant rhetoric, or in far-fetched, laboured, and fantastic imagery. What should we say? To say that the party addressed would listen to the whole with contemptuous coolness, and be possessed with a most absolute persuasion that the idle talker could have no practical object in view whatever, and cared not whether he obtained the benefit he sought or not,—to say that the speaker would infallibly fail of his object, and that he deserved to fail,—would be the least. We should pronounce him the most egregious fool imaginable. And yet he is not a greater,—not so great, if folly on a larger scale be greater folly,—as the orator who commits the very same errors in addressing a public audience.

It is not asserted, indeed, that so complete a departure from the principles of practical rhetoric, as the above, is often seen in a public speaker; or that even if there ever were such, it could, under such different circumstances, be equally glaring. That there are infinitely varied *degrees* within which such faults may display themselves, does not affect the general principles here laid down. In proportion as such faults exist, however, they must necessarily exert a pernicious influence, and in that proportion will they defeat the avowed and, indeed, the only *worthy* object of the orator.

Neither is it meant that nothing more is demanded of an orator than of any man in private life who endeavours *to persuade*. Far from it. The difference of the circumstances will, no doubt, dictate a proportionable difference of conduct; and the great complexity of intellectual effort, which efficient public speaking implies, requires unquestionably the highest order of genius. Still the general principles, somewhat modified, are in both cases the same. The most effective eloquence is always compounded of the same great elements, although they may be conjoined in very different proportions.

Whether, indeed, the peculiarities which distinguish the style of Demosthenes could ever be introduced into the eloquence of the pulpit, to the same extent as into that of the senate or the bar; or, if at all, to what precise extent they could be introduced, are questions which it is not necessary to discuss here. At the same time the writer cannot conceal his opinion that they might be adopted much further, not only than they ever have been,—for as yet they have scarcely been recognised at all,—but to a much greater extent than would at first sight probably be thought practicable.

It must be admitted, indeed, that since the eloquence of the pulpit has so much to do with the general principles of human character and conduct, and with topics which, though abstractedly of overpowering magnitude and sublimity, yet relate to the future and invisible world, far more of general reasoning and of imaginative description are pardonable in this than in any other species of eloquence. We concede, also, that the eloquence of the pulpit is in a great measure didactic; and, moreover, that it affords little scope for that intense emotion, those transports of passion, (at least of the more powerful kinds of passion,) which so generally accompany successful eloquence on merely secular topics. The strongest feelings of which it admits have little in common with those turbulent and tumultuous emotions in which, as immediately prompting to energetic action, human nature most delights, and the mere display of which tends to excite a sympathy so much more profound than the exhibition of those gentle and subdued feelings, which must ever reign in the bosom of the minister of Christ.

All these abatements, however, by no means imply that the eloquence of the pulpit is something totally and essentially different from eloquence of any other kind. They only indicate the modifications and limitations under which the same general principles must be applied. As long as it is admitted that the object of the christian orator is to convince and to persuade, and to convince that he *may* persuade—and that, moreover, to the most important conduct; as long as that nature on which he is instrumentally to operate is essentially the same; and as long as the same great conditions of persuasion must be complied with, so long must the christian preacher, if he would be successful, manage his tastes and habits and discipline his faculties, in accordance with the principles of universal rhetoric.

It is to be feared, that the true reason why the pulpit has in proportion produced so much less really effective eloquence than the bar or the senate, is to be sought not so much in the different circumstances in

* It will be at once seen that the writer has a reference more particularly to the pulpit, where the absurdities here supposed have been enacted a thousand times. But here *alone*. In no other orator,—in no political assembly—would such folly be tolerated for an instant.

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which the preacher is placed, or to the peculiarity of the *subject-matter* of his eloquence, but to the melancholy fact,—universally characteristic of our fallen race,—that both the speaker and his audience *feel* less deeply the important truths of religion than the most inconsiderable topics connected with the present life. The remoteness and distance of these truths leave them comparatively little power to affect the mind: consequently the preacher has often been tempted to treat them in a cold and professional manner; and the audience, to demand curious disquisitions to please their reason or brilliant illustration to amuse and delight the fancy, rather than that which alone would satisfy them in other cases,—practical arguments to convince the understanding, and motives directly prompting to action.

But whatever the causes which have led to this result, certain it is, that the principles of the most effective eloquence have been far less influential in this department than in any other; and should a vast augmentation of piety, or more just principles of rhetoric in reference to this subject, or, which is more probable, the concurrence of both, lead to an entire revolution both of opinion and practice,—a revolution which in our opinion must take place before the eloquence of the pulpit can attain its proper ascendency or exercise its legitimate influence,—the great mass of printed sermons will excite the astonishment of the christian church.

Vast numbers of them, indeed, will be read and admired as much as ever, and justly: but they will be admired for being *what they are*, excellent dissertations on particular points of theological science; or wonderful specimens of metaphysical subtlety and profound reasoning, of acute criticism or ingenious speculation; of beautiful and impressive description; of rich and varied imagery: many of them will be regarded as well fitted for the closet, where even poetry, and the delight it brings, may often serve indirectly the offices of eloquence; as admirably adapted to the retired hours of a contemplative or meditative piety; but, whatever their merits in these or other respects, the great mass of "printed sermons" will be regarded as totally destitute of all the characteristics of "sermons," if by that term is meant,—what is generally meant,—a certain species of *persuasive discourses*. That they should ever have been delivered from the pulpit with such pretensions, and published under such a name, will justly appear the most astounding of paradoxes. Few and far between, indeed, along the vast range of pulpit literature, are those passages which fully exemplify the principles we have endeavoured to illustrate; at all events, though some favourable specimens might be selected from the compositions of most celebrated preachers, such passages have no sort of proportion to others. Perhaps Chrysostom is the man in whom, notwithstanding his general resemblance to Jeremy Taylor, such passages most frequently occur.

If the "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor be examined on these principles, the defects of his mind become instantly apparent. His peculiarities could not but disclose themselves; such an imagination as his would defy the control of the severest discipline. Though his sermons, therefore, are wonderful compositions, regarded in any other light than that of "sermons," they are not distinguishable, except by name, from his other devotional and practical writings. It is true, there are some few passages of great force and energy, as well as beauty, one or two of which we here select.

The first shall be from the impressive sermon, entitled, "Doomsday Book; or Christ's Advent to Judgment."

"And because very many sins are sins of society and confederation; such are fornication, drunkenness, bribery, simony, rebellion, schism, and many others; it is a hard and a weighty consideration, what shall become of any one of us, who have tempted our brother or sister to sin and death: for though God hath spared our life, and they are dead, and their debt-books are sealed up till the day of account; yet the mischief of our sin is gone before us, and it is like a murder, but more execrable: the soul is dead in trespasses and sins, and sealed up to an eternal sorrow; and thou shalt see, at doomsday, what damnable uncharitableness thou hast done. That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations, might have followed the Lamb in a white robe; and that poor man, that is clothed with shame and flames of fire, would have shined in glory, but that thou didst force him to be partner of thy baseness. And who shall pay for this loss? a soul is lost by the means; thou hast defeated the holy purposes of the Lord's bitter passion by thy impurities; and what shall happen to thee, by whom thy brother dies eternally?"

We shall indulge our readers with one other extract. It shall be from the discourse, entitled, "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments; or, God's Method in curing Sinners." The latter part of the following extract is exceedingly affecting.

"Let, therefore, every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that God hath made us: besides that sweet language of his mercy, and his 'still voice' from heaven, consider what voices of thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the 'still voice' again. What dangers have any of you escaped? were you ever assaulted by the rudeness of an ill natured man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of

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you ever escape drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? Have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? Or, suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatened you all, and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you? That is evident. But if you had been a privado, and of the cabinet-council with your guardian angel, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near, that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had sent out his warrants to the exterminating angel, and our blessed Saviour by his intercession hath obtained a reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoicing at thy conversion and repentance; if you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministering spirit of God's "goodness and forbearance," did interpose and abate, or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head: it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly, that neither will give God thanks, nor secure thy own well-being."

In general, however, his ungovernable imagination is perpetually leading him into diffuse and copious description, and into curious and fantastic images, which are only distinguishable from the highest poetry by wanting metrical arrangement; while his habits of mind are continually betraying him into the style of philosophical disquisition, and his fulness of knowledge into discussions and allusions foreign to the subject. The defects of Jeremy Taylor's pulpit style, so far as they flowed from his ungovernable imagination, have been well pointed out by a man whose vigour of mind, severity of taste, and intensity of passion would probably almost have raised him to the rank of Demosthenes of the pulpit, had it not been for certain defects, partly his own and partly common to his age. We mean South. The passage now referred to is so curious that we beg to cite it, not merely for the amusement of the reader, but to illustrate the preceding remarks on the vices of Taylor's oratory. Though there might be, and very probably was, somewhat of malice and envy lurking in his satire, it is at the same time full of important truth. Even though the phrases he ridicules had not been found in Jeremy Taylor's writings, they are so characteristic that the person, for whom the satire is intended, could not have been mistaken; they are, however, Taylor's veritable expressions, and are to be found in his "Sermons." The passage from South is cited from a sermon preached at Christ's Church, Oxford, 1668. The text was Luke xxi. 16. "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

"And thus also it is with the most necessary and important truths; to adorn and clothe them is to cover them, and that to obscure them. The eternal salvation and damnation of souls are not things to be treated of with jests and witticisms. And he who thinks to furnish himself out of plays and romances with language for the pulpit, shews himself much fitter to act a part in the revels, than for a cure of souls.

"'I speak the words of soberness,' said St. Paul, Acts xxvi. 25; and I preach the gospel not with the 'enticing words of man's wisdom,' 1 Cor. ii. 4. This was the way of the apostle's discoursing of things sacred. Nothing here, 'of the fringes of the north star;' nothing of 'nature's becoming unnatural,' nothing of the 'down of angels' wings,' or the 'beautiful locks of cherubims:' no starched similitudes introduced with a 'thus have I seen a cloud rolling in its airy mansion,' and the like. No, these were sublimities above the rise of the apostolic spirit. For the apostles, poor mortals, were content to take lower steps, and to tell the world in plain terms, 'that he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned.' And this was the dialect which pierced the conscience, and made the hearers cry out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the breast: and when men came from such sermons, they never commended the preacher for his taking voice or gesture; for the pureness of such a simile, or the quaintness of such a sentence; but they spoke like men conquered with the overpowering force and evidence of the most concerning truths; much in the words of the two disciples going to Emmaus; 'Did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the scriptures?'

"In a word, the apostles' preaching was therefore mighty and successful; because plain, natural, and familiar, and by no means above the capacity of their hearers: nothing being more preposterous, than for those who were professedly aiming at men's hearts, to miss the mark, by shooting over their heads."

It may also be remarked not only that the meditative character of Jeremy Taylor's mind, and the excess of his imagination, (the former in some measure the natural consequence of the latter,) were unfavourable to his reaching the highest excellence as an orator; but—and this was also in a great degree the result of his peculiar intellectual temperament—there was too little of passion in his nature; his feelings were altogether of the gentle, calm, and subdued kind. Of the deficiencies here pointed out, it is impossible to obtain a clearer idea than by comparing the style of Jeremy Taylor with the prose style of Milton,—a man who to an imagination scarcely less active than that of Taylor, and more lofty and sublime, added a larger portion of the terrible energy of Demosthenes, than any other man that ever lived. It is impossible for any intelli-

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gent reader to peruse any considerable portion of the writings of these wonderful men, without perceiving the immeasurable superiority of the oratorical genius of the one to that of the other. Though Milton is almost as lavish as Jeremy Taylor in the use of his imagination, yet how much more severe are the forms it assumes, by how much more brevity are they characterized, and how much more energy do they possess! A metaphor, an epithet or two, often do the work of what would be, in Taylor, a long description.

The principal features of Jeremy Taylor's *moral and religious character* are such as cannot fail to secure him the reverence and the love of all who study his life and writings. His piety was sincere and eminently practical, his devotion in an unusual degree sustained and elevated, while benevolence and charity, candour and forbearance, and all the softer and more lovely features of the christian character, appear to have been in habitual exercise. In this as in every other instance, however, the aspect his religious character assumed was in great measure determined by the peculiarities of his intellect, original and acquired.—Religion was never designed to reduce all human character to the same uniform standard. Here, as in every other department of his works, God loves to afford, in the most prodigal manner, the most various exhibition of his power and wisdom; and for this, has made abundant provision in the original diversities of mental and moral structure, and the multiform discipline of human life. Almost innumerable combinations of christian excellence, some of them presenting the most marked contrasts and others differing by indistinguishable shades, are to be found in the members of the universal church. Religion is intended, it is true, to correct all vice and to remove all imperfections; but the kinds, and degrees, and modifications, and aspects of positive excellence are as numberless as the peculiarities of individual character. The productions which adorn the paradise of God, from the loftiest cedar of Lebanon, to the lowliest plant that flourishes beneath its shade, are all pervaded by the same great principle of spiritual life; are all sustained by the same influences of heaven and of earth; all imbibe living moisture from the same dew and shower, and rejoice in the genial radiance of the same celestial sun-shine; but they, at the same time, present endless varieties of form and structure, of fruit and flower, of leaf and fragrance. The waters of life, (if we may vary the figure,) as they exist in the bosom of each christian, may exhibit the same purity and crystalline clearness, and possess the same invigorating and refreshing qualities; and yet, in each case, may be marked by some slight tincture derived from those strata of character, through which they have been distilled into the heart.

To apply these general observations to Jeremy Taylor. His gentle melancholy; his ascetic tendencies; his brilliant imagination, and his consequent love of the picturesque in religion; his extensive erudition and the associations formed upon it, particularly his reverence for antiquity, imparted a peculiar tone and colouring to his religious sentiment and religious feeling. A word or two on each of these points.

It is obvious, that with all the admirable social qualities he possessed, he was characterized by a spirit of gentle melancholy, in some measure natural to him, but too surely confirmed by the sorrows of his life; and this, though it is evident that religion was not only his daily employment, but his daily delight, has impressed itself strongly on his devotional and practical writings. Had he lived in those early ages of christianity when the hermit's life was so eagerly sought, and could plead a strong apology for its extravagance in the severity of persecution, he would probably have buried himself in the solitudes of the desert, and retiring from the haunts of men and the engagements of active life, have abandoned himself to that love of contemplation which was undoubtedly his ruling passion. It may, however, be justly questioned, whether even then he would have fallen into any of the extravagances of the early devotees, or practised any of their self-denying austerities from the superstitions which so soon corrupted primitive piety. Amidst all his tendencies to asceticism, there was a large residuum of strong practical wisdom; and whenever he enters on the discussion of these topics in his works, he carefully distinguishes between the abstract worthlessness of all self-denying austerities in themselves, and their occasional uses in reference to the distinct ends of self-control and self-discipline; and *in general* discriminates the limits within which such austerities may be practised, and within which they ought to be restrained, with great precision and sagacity.

His habitual melancholy has given a peculiar tinge to all his devotional writings. His religion was full of "hope," but not of "joy;" gentle and tranquil, but a stranger to the rapture and triumph which have often characterized piety not more eminent. By this we by no means mean to imply that Jeremy Taylor was more in bondage to doubts and fears, as to his final state, than many other christians; for there is the most abundant testimony that he was not more troubled with these than any good man must expect to be, who knows himself, his fluctuating feelings and his many infirmities; nor can it be thought that a con-

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fidence which never falters, which knows neither fears nor doubts, is the result of "the assurance of faith;" it is too often the fruit of ignorant presumption.—Of all this, however, we are not at present speaking. The present observations merely apply to the general tone and colouring which attach to the *expression* of his religious feelings.

It was doubtless this disposition to melancholy, which so often made Jeremy Taylor, in his meditations and devotional writings, dwell at such disproportionate length, and with such sad intensity of feeling, on the sorrows of life, on the vanity and nothingness of the world, on death, and on all the gloomy topics connected with it; topics which, judiciously tempered with the grand and inspiring consolations of the gospel, are admirably calculated to produce an abundantly beneficial impression; but which, in Jeremy Taylor's writings, are often indulged to excess because insisted on too exclusively. These observations are more particularly applicable to his "Holy Living and Dying" and his "Contemplations on the State of Man."

It has been already remarked that the activity of his imagination had no mean influence in the formation of his religious character. It predisposed his mind to a more incessant and intent contemplation of those sublime realities, and grand and imposing truths, which constitute the christian faith. Here he is at home indeed; and, in innumerable passages, the combined influence of ardent feeling and a glowing fancy has presented us with descriptions that are paralleled by nothing out of the volume of inspiration itself,—of the felicities and glories of heaven; of the sublime realities of the invisible and eternal world; of the Divine love as displayed in the gospel; of the profound wisdom which pervades its whole economy; of the beauty and mutual harmony of the principles of conduct which it enjoins, and the excellence of that immortal character which it is intended to develope.* When on such themes, he often pours forth strains of the loftiest eloquence, in a style not unworthy of the lyric muse; strains such as Pindar, had he written prose, need not have been ashamed to own. So uniform, indeed, so irrepressible is the energy of his imagination, that it often breaks out even in that species of composition in which it ought to have been most subdued, and the great charm of which consists in the most unadorned simplicity of expression;—we mean in his prayers and forms of devotion. That whenever this is the case, Jeremy Taylor is guilty of an egregious violation of taste, we need not state. Such instances, however, are not very frequent; his directly devotional style is usually characterized by all those qualities which place the liturgical compositions of his, and of a preceding age, at an immeasurable distance from those of more modern times; they are distinguished by that sublime simplicity, that deep solemnity of spirit, that harmony and music of expression, which we shall in vain seek in the devotional writings of later times.

It need hardly be remarked that the influence of the imagination, as well as of the "gentle prejudice of antiquity," as he himself calls it, led him to lay no mean stress on the *externals* of religion; on matters of a ritual and ceremonial nature. No one, indeed, could believe more firmly than he did, that the essence of religion did not consist in these things. Yet the *tendency* of his nature was evidently rather to overrate their importance than the contrary; so much is this the case, that probably nothing but a protestant education could have checked them;† while, if he had been born within the communion of the church of Rome, there is but little presumption in saying that his reverence for ancient customs, for rites and ceremonies, for fasts and festivals consecrated by the example of ages and invested by his ardent imagination with all that is striking and imposing, would have degenerated into the most abject superstition; and though we cannot believe that, even under such circumstances, Jeremy Taylor would have lost his characteristic mildness and spirit of charity, or that he would not have sustained a reputation worthy of comparison with that of a Fénélon or a Pascal, yet the combined influence of imagination and of his prejudices in favour of antiquity, would probably have rendered him one of the most strenuous champions of that very system, the main errors of which he has done so much to expose. If Jeremy Taylor erred, however, on the side of excessive attachment to matters of mere ritual, he erred no more than one of the most celebrated of his contemporaries erred on the opposite side; we refer to Milton. These great men in some respects more nearly resembled one another, and in others were more completely unlike, than any other men of the age. It is astonishing that any one with so much imagination as Milton, should have *finally* adopted a system of opinions on this subject at the remotest possible distance from all in which imagination delights, from all that

* See particularly instances of such passages in his "Preface" to his "Life of Christ;" Rules iii. iv. of Chap. i. Book II. of the "Ductor Dubitantium;" and in his sermons entitled "The Return of Prayers;" "The Faith and Patience of the Saints, or the Righteous Cause Oppressed;" "Of Growth in Grace;" and "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy."

† It was doubtless these tendencies, together with his ascetic habits, which fixed on him the suspicion of a leaning to popery; a suspicion, which, in spite of the clearest evidence to the contrary, continued to follow him throughout life.

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appeals to the senses and the material part of our nature; which regarded man as a purely spiritual essence. Still more extraordinary is it that his imagination after rejecting its appropriate aliment, could sustain itself in such strength and vigour, on the few simple abstractions which, even at an earlier period, formed his creed; or that the poet should have been able to create such sublime and enchanting visions as are often presented in his prose writings, from such unpromising and unpoetic materials. We have nothing to do here, however, with the signal triumph of genius and imagination, which Milton has achieved; we are only concerned to point out the error of stripping christianity of every thing external; an error which, if generally adopted, and carried to the extent to which Milton carried it, in his latter days, would be far more fatal than the opposite error of his great contemporary. It is difficult to say with what excess of forms religion may still exist; but except in the instance of Milton,—and where is there another such,—it is difficult to say how it should exist at all in a mind that rejects all those circumstantials, which, as human nature is at present constituted, can alone effectually fix our duties on our memories; remind us of the times of their recurrence; render them more easy by rendering them regular and habitual; and bind upon us the performance of our devotions, by a powerful complication of associations;—a mind, which, under the vain apprehension of enslaving itself to the external and material, will observe no set hours or days for devotions, no outward signs, no particular postures, no stated place. Christianity, though the most sublimely spiritual system of religion, has availed itself of the aid which the external can minister to the immaterial, just so far as is compatible with the most efficient provisions against superstition. Its rites and ceremonies, its external observances of all kinds, are as few and as simple as possible; but still it is not without them. That divine philosophy which pervades the whole scheme of the gospel, and which has so exactly adapted it to the intricate mechanism of human nature, knew man too well, and understood too perfectly his dependence on the senses, the extensive influence of the material world on all his habits and associations, and the inevitable necessity that it should tend powerfully either to vice or virtue, to neglect so important a feature in his constitution.

The grand difficulty, however, is to maintain this middle path of wisdom. With that passion for extremes which is ever characteristic of human nature, we see in the age of Jeremy Taylor and Milton, two parties, one of which endeavoured to encumber christianity with a vast number of idle and fantastic ceremonies, and the other to strip it, to very nakedness, of all that is external. These tendencies existed in different degrees in different individuals. Jeremy Taylor, however, on his side carried the tendencies of his party to a much less fatal extent than Milton did on his.

But to proceed with the analysis of Taylor's religious character. It was remarked that the profound erudition of Jeremy Taylor, more especially his intimate acquaintance with all the writings of ecclesiastical antiquity, tended, in conjunction with many other qualities of his mind, to modify his religious character. This observation has been already partly illustrated in speaking of his excessive attachment to what was external and ceremonial in religion. This effect was in part the result of his imagination. It is observable, however, that his imagination sought no innovations; antiquity had already determined the direction it should take. The same cause, his familiarity with antiquity, has given a peculiar tinge to his religious phraseology, and probably, also, in some measure to his religious feelings. Thus we find him both in his controversial and his devotional writings perpetually adopting, and often apparently unconsciously, not only the religious terms and phraseology of early ecclesiastical antiquity, but of those devotional and casuistical writers of the Roman church, with which he was so profoundly acquainted. Sometimes, indeed, his mode of expression, borrowed from these sources, requires to be interpreted with candour, and will inevitably afford abundant room for suspicion and cavil to all those who have not made themselves familiarly acquainted with the general strain of his writings. But on this point we need say little; it having been already observed that there is no writer who can so ill afford to be interpreted by single expressions, or insulated passages. For instance, had he not frequently declared his belief, that the spirit of religion is something very different from external forms and ceremonies, and that the want of it can never be compensated by any frequency or diligence in acts of mere outward devotion, one would almost be led to think, from his occasional phraseology, that he imagined there was a species of mechanical efficacy in the mere number and assiduity of our prayers, fasts, thanksgivings, alms, and other acts of religion and of charity. Interpreted, however, by an enlarged view of his writings, and not by an exclusive attention to insulated sentences, and making due allowance for the peculiar tinge and colouring which all his habits of thought communicated to his style, we are persuaded there is little foundation for any such suspicions.

The religion of Jeremy Taylor was eminently influential on his whole nature; it is this which imparts

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to his character its chief beauty and lustre, and to his writings their chief interest and value. He evidently took enlarged and sublime views of the character which the gospel is designed to form within us; of the purity and spirituality, elevation and simplicity of mind, which it inculcates; of the habitual benevolence, the charity, the meekness, the lowliness, the humility it enjoins; and of all those retiring but more difficult virtues on which all other systems of religion have poured scorn, as incompatible with magnanimity and greatness; but which the gospel more justly accounts amongst the most heroic and superhuman achievements of excellence. And as Jeremy Taylor formed these correct and sublime views of the objects and requirements of the gospel, so he habitually and diligently endeavoured to form himself after this model. It is this which gives such a peculiar value to his practical writings, and sets them so very far above his controversial. It is the general tone of these *latter*, however, that affords the most unequivocal displays of that elevated personal piety, which shines through all his writings. It is true that all his works breathe a delightful spirit of benevolence and charity; but in controversy he was called on to *display* and *maintain* its spirit. It may be fairly said that an amiable spirit in controversy, (which is so apt to influence, in a greater or less degree, the malignant passions, and which is so very rarely disjoined from them,) forms one of the most incontrovertible evidences of elevated piety; because it is precisely this point in which so many men of indubitable excellence have failed. These remarks are further strengthened by reflecting on the controversial spirit which characterized the age; an age of almost boundless licence in abuse and sarcasm. In that age many of the best men, if we may judge from their writings, seemed to consider controversy a province over which the charities of christianity, which extended to all things else in human character and conduct, was to have no influence. Jeremy Taylor is an honourable exception. It may, without hesitation, be asserted that, considering their extent and the haste with which many of them were composed, his controversial writings will sustain a comparison not only with those of most of the divines of his age, but of any age; nay, there are not only few,—very few, who can be compared with him in this respect, but very few who have equalled him; while we know of none who have surpassed him, unless it be the truly great Howe. Even in his controversies with the Romanists, the appalling consequences and the infinite absurdity of whose errors, and the eminent want of candour with which they carried on the controversy, would have excused some considerable asperity, Jeremy Taylor maintains in general an amiable spirit. There was but one instance in which he failed, and that was in his controversy with Dr. Jeanes, on the subject of "original sin." In this case, however, peculiar circumstances tended to inflame his passions; not to mention that he was *in the wrong*, a circumstance alone often sufficient to account for loss of temper.

Nor was it in controversy only that Jeremy Taylor manifested this amiable and lovely spirit. We have dwelt on this merely as affording the most signal proof of it. Throughout the whole of life, in all its relations, (and many of its scenes were of a peculiarly trying character,) he displayed the same spirit of unfeigned piety, humility, gentleness, and benevolence. The general spirit of his writings, and all the traditionary accounts of his character, attest his great personal and social worth,—his eminent excellence as a man and a christian.

There is one defect in Jeremy Taylor's practical writings, which deserves to be noticed; because, without any fault of his, they are liable to be misunderstood; and probably have been so by many a reader. It is this; that considering what the bulk of his readers probably would be, he has not brought forward with sufficient frequency those grand doctrines of the gospel upon which the whole superstructure of christian duty rests; doctrines which alone can furnish motives sufficiently powerful to secure obedience, or to transform the reluctant and servile spirit of duty into a service of freedom, of cheerfulness, and love. He seems to have taken it for granted, that his writings would be read principally by those (and they are indeed the parties calculated to derive most benefit from them) who are already experimentally acquainted with the gospel; impressed with all its great peculiarities; readers who would not need to be reminded at every step of those elementary principles, without which duty is slavery, and the spirit of peace and of joy impossible of attainment. Unless the readers of Taylor's practical writings should (as their author doubtless intended) habitually carry in their minds these principles, and interpret him by them, it is not improbable that they may form erroneous views of the excellent author's intentions; and, unless they be well established in just notions of the faith, extract poison from that which he designed for nourishment.

As a purely speculative theologian, Jeremy Taylor, for reasons which have been largely specified in a former part of this Essay, is very far from being worthy of implicit reliance. It has been observed, however, in a preceding page, that, considering the extent of his writings, he rarely touches on such matters. His works are almost wholly practical.

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And, in matters *purely* practical, however complicated and difficult of decision the matters which come before him, he is almost always correct. Here he affords a striking exemplification of peculiarities already noticed in a previous part of this Essay. His general correctness in these questions is undoubtedly to be attributed to his strong perception of the principles of the gospel, and his paramount regard to them; in other words, the elevation and activity of his *practical* piety, the love and the admiration of *goodness*. This philosophy of the heart, if we may use such an expression, this disposition to do what is *right*,—a disposition which the practical influence of christianity cannot fail to inspire even into understandings immeasurably inferior to that of Jeremy Taylor, is often as unerring as an oracle; and will avail more than the acutest powers of speculation, in clearing up the intricacies of a subtle casuistry. Where such a spirit exists, the judgment will be always happily, nobly biassed to the side of virtue and goodness; even where it errs in its decisions, it will always be in favour of the more religious, the more charitable view of the question; since it will avoid not only "evil," but even the "appearance of it," and, therefore, will be always safe if not always right. Nor is it to be wondered at, that such a spirit should be generally *right*, since wisdom and goodness dwell eternally together, and righteousness and truth are twin sisters. That he who loves what is *right* should generally hit upon what is true, is but a fulfilment of the promise, "that he who doth the will of God, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

In a curious, and we may add eloquent, passage in the "Ductor Dubitantium," in which Jeremy Taylor characterizes the merits of the earlier and the more modern writers on the subject of christian ethics, he has unconsciously drawn that very feature of his character which we are now considering. After balancing the greater speculative acuteness of the latter casuists, against the more simple-minded piety of the former, he seems disposed to think that altogether the superiority rested on the side of the ancients. He says,

"But to proceed in the comparing the ages: these latter ages have more heresies, but the former had more dangerous; and, although the primitive piety was high and exemplary, yet the effect of that was, that in matters of practice they were more to be followed, but not in questions of speculation; these later ages are indeed diseased, like children that have the rickets, but their upper parts do swell, and their heads are bigger; "sagaciores in dogmate, nequiores in fide;" and if they could be abstracted from the mixtures of interest, and the engagement of their party, they are in many things better able to teach the people, than the ancients; that is, they are best able to guide, but not always safest to be followed."

Whether this representation of the two classes of writers Jeremy Taylor contrasts, is quite correct or not, it is certain that it affords a very striking view of some of his own peculiarities.

Of the practical writings of Jeremy Taylor it would be difficult to speak too highly; but if asked precisely what was his *theological system*, it would be no easy matter to give a distinct answer.

As a theologian, he scarcely belongs to any particular *school*. For though there were some denominations with which he much more nearly symbolized than with others, he altogether agreed with none. There is, indeed, throughout the whole of his writings, an astonishing disregard of the precision and caution,—in a word, of all the chief peculiarities of systematic theology. Far be it from us to blame this popular style, in writings like his, the great bulk of which were *practical* and intended for popular use. It is, however, an inevitable result of such a style, that it will often be difficult to ascertain exactly what was an author's precise theory of doctrine; not to mention that there will be many instances, in which he himself will forget it. In theological works of this kind, doctrines are introduced detached and in fragments; and their connexion and harmony with the system of truth in the writer's mind, is not pointed out. If they are doctrines, whose theoretical consistency with others will only be apparent by the utmost caution of expression, the writer will often *seem* to be contradictory when he really is not; not to mention, that when deeply impressed with the importance of some particular truth or when urging on men with holy vehemence some practical duty, theologians forget for a moment the cold and frigid system to which they are attached, and speak of that particular truth, which for the moment absorbs attention, with a degree of warmth and zeal apparently disproportionate to the other great truths with which it stands in connexion. This is nature; and thus it is, that the Calvinist is often found *apparently* adopting the language of Arminianism, and Arminians that of Calvinism. At such moments, they forget the technicalities and subtle distinctions of their respective systems, and though all that they say may be, in their own minds, capable of being perfectly reconciled with those systems, they seldom, at such moments, enter into any such elaborate distinctions, nor are they often understood if they do. A truth may be stated with great power for all *practical* purposes, where there is any thing but the accuracy of systematic theology; nay, often the more forcibly on these very grounds.

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For example, the Arminian believes that it is true, in a certain sense, that man's salvation is wholly the fruit of Divine grace; and there is a sense in which the Calvinist believes that every man can be saved if he will, and that it is entirely his own fault if he be not saved; now whether the explanations and distinctions by which these theologians reconcile their sentiments to their systems, the main parts of which may *seem* so much at variance with them, be satisfactory or not, it is obvious, that when under the influence of strong and excited feeling, and solely intent on a practical exhibition of what they *feel* rather than perceive to be important truth, they will use nearly the same language and *appear* to occupy each other's ground. The subtle distinctions with which each, in a cooler statement of his opinions, reconciles his practice to his theory, are quite forgotten: each abandoning what is peculiar in his system, they must for a moment meet on that common ground where both parties are in the right.

The same remarks, to a considerable extent, apply even where there *is* in the author's mind a consistent system of doctrine. A perfect freedom from the precision of a system, eminently characterizes the sacred writings, which were intended to treat theology, not as it is taught in the schools, but in the most impressive form for all practical purposes; it is conveyed to us in fragments and detached parts, as present exigencies or peculiar circumstances suggested; and the consequence is, that the sacred writers often express themselves with a strength and energy, which at first sight, and without a careful comparison of such passages with others, would appear to be hardly consistent.

Jeremy Taylor's loose and popular phraseology, together with another circumstance already adverted to, the characteristic ardour with which he expresses himself on any topic which, for the moment, engages his attention, perpetually betray him into apparent discrepancies of statement, but which, in very many instances, are, we are persuaded, no more than apparent. This, however, will be granted only by those who possess an extensive familiarity with his phraseology, and a disposition to interpret it with candour.

But this apology, it must be admitted, only extends to certain points. It cannot be denied, that his works abound in many *real* as well as apparent discrepancies and misstatements, and show, as before stated, that he did not hold any consistent *system* of theological opinions. Thus, in the question of original sin, he was in some respects a Pelagian, yet (as Heber observes) these sentiments are at direct variance with numberless expressions in his practical writings. Again, that he was no Calvinist in theory, is certain; yet he often uses language which can by no possibility be made to quadrate with any opposite system of doctrine.

This Essay will be concluded with some very brief remarks on the general character of Jeremy Taylor's principal productions. Little or nothing will be said of his peculiarities of manner or style; enough, it is conceived, has already been said on these points in the preceding parts of the Essay. No author ever stamped his writings with the impress of his mind more strongly than did Jeremy Taylor.

In noticing his works, we shall generally take them in the order in which they were published, except when they are on the same or kindred subjects;—such will be classed together.

The first work which, according to this arrangement, demands attention, is his "Episcopacy Asserted;" published at the request of Charles I. in 1642. As the few observations to be made on this piece equally apply to his "Apology for Authorized and Set Forms of Liturgy," first published in 1646, and his "Discourse of Confirmation," which did not appear till 1663, they may all be classed together. On such subjects, Jeremy Taylor might have been expected to put forth all his powers; yet these works may be safely pronounced, on the whole, the least successful of his controversial writings. Some of his readers may probably impute this inferiority rather to the nature of the subjects, than to any fault in the writer. On this point, it is not for us to deliver a judgment. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

The "Apology for Liturgies," however, is undeniably far superior to the other two. Of the "Discourse of Confirmation," even Bishop Heber is constrained to say, that he cannot consider it "a favourable specimen of Taylor's genius."

In these works, but especially the first and last, he has furnished most conclusive evidence of the correctness of certain remarks formerly made on his character as a reasoner, and of the influence his learning exerted over his logical powers. It was there remarked, that he is but too apt to measure his arguments more by *number* than by *weight*, and to furnish rather what his vast reading has supplied, than what his deliberate judgment could approve. This is obviously the case in the present instances. In his eagerness to make good, and more than make good his positions; to render unassailable, institutions which he so profoundly reverenced and admired;—he presses every argument, sound and unsound, into the service;

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and, though he omits nothing that is really valid, introduces much that is perfectly worthless, and which no *judicious* advocates in the same cause, even in his own time, ever thought of employing. He who, in defending "*episcopacy*," could argue that the form of ecclesiastical government and polity which Christ intended for his church, must be purely matter of revelation, and who could then attempt to seek episcopacy in the New Testament, in all its parts, and in its fully developed form; he who could find, in the appointment of the twelve apostles and seventy disciples, the first institution of bishops and presbyters; he who, in defending the rite of confirmation, could allege the descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lord after his baptism, and our Saviour's declaration to Nicodemus, of the necessity of baptism by water and the Spirit, as *proof* that confirmation is a *divinely constituted rite*, can hardly be trusted as a *judicious* controvertist, however multifarious or profound his learning. Not seldom would he be likely to impair the force of arguments really sound, by mingling them with others so obviously absurd and puerile.

All these treatises, however, are full of learning; and in many parts distinguished by great acuteness and ingenuity of argument; while the "Apology for the Authorized and Set Forms of Liturgy," contains many splendid specimens of Taylor's characteristic eloquence.

The next considerable work which demands notice, and which first appeared in 1648, is his "Liberty of Prophesying." This, of all his controversial pieces, is the one by which his name is best known, and which has most endeared him to posterity. It is, as already stated, a defence of *toleration*, a doctrine then little understood and less practised.

Though one of the earliest, and by far the most eloquent work, that had as yet appeared on this much controverted subject, it was by no means the *first*. The independents, to whom undoubtedly belongs the immortal honour of having first advocated, and of having first attempted to carry into practice, the principles of toleration, had already published several tracts and sermons in defence of this doctrine.

It is true that Jeremy Taylor's work is *a defence of toleration*, yet those who should judge of it merely from a knowledge of other great works on the same subject, (more especially that of Locke,) would form a very erroneous conception of its nature. It differs from other works very materially, both in the nature of the arguments on which it lays the most stress and in the extent to which it advocates the doctrine itself. In some respects the toleration for which Taylor pleads, is far more limited than a just and enlarged view of the subject would demand, and in others more extensive than is contended for even by many of its advocates at the present day. A word or two on these points.

As to his arguments, he has chiefly insisted on those which other writers on the same subject have considered subordinate, while those which they justly regard as principal, he has nearly omitted altogether.

Thus, while the generality of those who have advocated toleration, at least since Locke's time, have founded their arguments principally on the *inalienable right* of all men to form their own opinions on the subject of religion, as irresponsible, except to the Supreme, for the exercise of their freedom of thought, Jeremy Taylor pleads for it principally on the grounds of the infinite difficulty, and, in many cases, absolute impossibility, of ascertaining what *is* truth; and the consequent expediency and duty of treating differences of opinion with enlarged charity and forbearance. *He* pleads for it from a deep compassion for human infirmities and frailty; *others*, from a consciousness that such freedom is an inalienable prerogative of our nature. It follows, of course, from his mode of exhibiting and defending the doctrine, that his toleration would only extend to those subordinate and non-essential points, in which it may be absolutely impossible or exceedingly difficult to ascertain the truth; and that, consequently, if there are any fundamental truths which may be deemed sufficiently plain to all, and about which there is little or no dispute, toleration is not to be extended to those who deny them. It is precisely within these limits that he constructs his theory.

In consequence, as it was necessary, on his hypothesis, to draw the line somewhere, he would extend toleration to all who agree in the belief of the prime articles of the christian faith, as embodied in the Apostles' creed, with the single exception of the clause respecting "Christ's descent into hell;" leaving all at perfect liberty to form their own opinions on all subordinate points of doctrine and of church government.

This theory, defective as it is, was, it must be confessed, an astonishing triumph of charity for that age, and, had it been fully acted upon, would, *in those times*, have been productive of as much practical benefit to the nation to which it was more immediately proposed, as a theory founded on principles far more comprehensive and abstractedly more just; and for this simple reason, that in that age there were few who *did not* agree in the fundamental articles of the Apostles' creed; all the more bitter and intolerant feeling was

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displayed precisely on those points, on which Taylor would have left every man to the liberty of his own reason. Still, however, viewed as a theory of toleration, irrespective of the peculiarities of the age and nation, it must be acknowledged to be exceedingly imperfect. It was this which induced us to observe, that *in some respects*, the toleration for which he pleads is far more limited than it ought to be. It is obvious that his theory extends no indulgence to those who should deny any of the prime articles of the Apostles' creed, (a class of men who are now universally admitted to have as much right to toleration as any other classes of religionists,) still less to those who should reject christianity altogether, or to the professors of a totally different system of religion. There are many passages of the work, however, which indicate that Jeremy Taylor was not far from more comprehensive views of the subject, and that he often found himself shackled by the limits he had imposed on himself. This is clearly apparent in his apologies for the "anabaptists" and "papists," apologies which subjected him in many quarters to the severest censures.

It is not difficult to trace the causes which induced Jeremy Taylor to found his plea for toleration, rather on the pity due to human frailty than on the rights of reason. It was another of the many instances, —some of which have been already referred to,—in which his philosophy was the fruit of his benevolence, and in which the instincts of an ardent and unfeigned charity, in the absence of more enlarged and comprehensive speculation, led him at least a considerable distance on the road to truth.

But it has been remarked, that if in one respect Jeremy Taylor's theory was defective, and the toleration for which he pleaded too limited, in another it is far more extensive than many of its advocates in the present day would approve. He goes so far as to contend, (as indeed might be inferred from the title of the work,) that no communion ought to impose on its ministers the belief of any other articles, than those fundamental ones on which he bases his whole scheme of toleration. Into this view he was naturally led by considering the question not merely as an advocate of the *rights of men*, but as a theologian anxious for the growth and prosperity of the christian church. The mere advocate of the civil rights of men has done his duty on this great point, when he has vindicated their liberty to form and express their own opinions without reference to any particular system of religious belief. It is enough for him if no man imposes his peculiar opinions on his neighbour, and no communion its doctrines on another communion. But the christian, viewing the whole subject in relation to the principles of that religion he professes, would go somewhat farther. It is, indeed, a general truth, that every community of men has an abstract right to admit and exclude its own members on its own terms; but Jeremy Taylor would have these terms as few and as simple as possible; not multiplied beyond the most apparent necessity, nor beyond the candid interpretation of the great statute-book. Such a man would argue thus for the sake of the union and the consequent progress of the universal church.

Whether Jeremy Taylor's principles can ever be acted on to the fullest extent, with respect to the admission or exclusion of the ministers or stated members of any particular communion, may admit of question; but there is little hazard in asserting, that they ought at least to regulate the intercourse of the ministers and members of *differing* communions, with one another. Viewed in this light, his system exhibits a profound knowledge of the great principles of evangelical charity, and forms an illustrious instance of the extent to which a sublime and eminently practical piety can sometimes overbear all the prejudices of a particular age and country, and anticipate that better order of things,—that reign of universal forbearance and love,—to which all things are tending. It may be confidently affirmed that the views of Jeremy Taylor on this subject are rapidly diffusing themselves in the present day. While religious communions continue to stand sullenly aloof from one another on points which they all mutually admit to be non-essential; while their ministers refuse all interchange of offices; so long must they, when judged by the enlarged principles of the gospel, be accounted *intolerant*, whatever liberty they may allow to one another. They may not wish to impose their creed on other denominations of christians; but so long as there is no sympathy, no communion, no interchange of kindness between the differing parties, so long are they violating the great principle of christian toleration. They may retain their different opinions; they may, they *must* form separate communions on those differences; but whenever those differences are confessedly non-essential, it ought not to prevent, and the time is coming when it will not prevent, a truly fraternal intercourse. Then, and not till then, will they be *truly* tolerant.

Jeremy Taylor, after he had attained the honours of a bishopric, was charged with having at least partially abandoned the principles maintained in the "Liberty of Prophesying," in certain public discourses, more especially in his "Sermon," preached at the opening of the Parliament in Ireland. It ap-

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pears, however, to the present writer, as to Bishop Heber, that Taylor cannot be justly charged with having materially modified any of his main opinions. The supposition has very probably flowed from the altered *tone* which Jeremy Taylor adopted. We all know that a total change of circumstances will make a wonderful difference in the mode of stating certain sentiments we still hold, as well as in the degree of zeal with which we defend them. It was not in human nature that Jeremy Taylor (and with all his excellencies, he was by no means exempt from our common frailties) should express himself, when raised to a bishopric, and, above all, severely annoyed by those very differences of religion for which he had claimed toleration, with the same earnestness and eagerness with which he expressed himself, when his own church was under a cloud, and a suppliant for that indulgence which she, in common with other communions, had so long denied to others.

The "Liberty of Prophesying" is introduced by a beautiful dedication to Hatton, in which the writer briefly but most eloquently expounds the principles of the work. The work itself is divided into twenty-two sections. The first two are occupied in explaining the general principles on which his scheme of toleration is founded; the following seven, in showing that there is no *certain* judge of controversies; neither "scripture," from the differing views of its interpreters; nor "tradition," nor "councils," nor "the pope," nor the "fathers or writers ecclesiastical," nor the church "in its diffusive capacity." The next three sections are employed in discussing the "authority of reason," and "the causes which render errors innocent in pious persons." The thirteenth and fourteenth enjoin the conduct to be pursued "towards those who differ from us;" the fourteenth is a noble chapter on the origin of persecution. From the fifteenth to the twentieth sections, the author is engaged in showing within what limits the principle of toleration should be adopted by churches and governors, with an apology for the anabaptists and Roman catholics. The last two sections are thus entitled; "The duty of particular churches in allowing communion," and, "That particular men may communicate with churches of different persuasions, and how far they may do it."

Such is the general character and such the outline of this great work. There are some subordinate statements with which few would in this day agree, but which cannot be specifically noticed in the narrow limits of the present Essay. The whole work abounds in learning, and is full of Taylor's sublime and characteristic eloquence.

The next work of any considerable magnitude was, his "Life of Christ, or the Great Exemplar." As the "Holy Living and Dying," (which was published very shortly after it,) and the "Contemplations on the State of Man," are all mainly of a practical and devotional character, they will here be classed together, as they have many of the same general features of resemblance, and were intended to serve precisely the same great ends.

To these works, more especially, are applicable certain observations which were made some few pages back, when speaking of Jeremy Taylor's religious character. It was then mentioned, as a matter of regret, that the pious author did not always give sufficient prominence to those cardinal doctrines of the gospel, which lie at the basis of the whole christian system; and, without which, precepts may be enjoined, indeed, but will never be fully obeyed. That Jeremy Taylor firmly believed all this; that he was deeply impressed with the beautiful and symmetrical structure of the gospel, and the mutual subordination of all its parts,—is evident from numberless passages of his works; still he is apt, in the works now under consideration, to introduce the grand and inspiring topics of the christian faith with too great a rarity; to insist on many*

* These observations apply not so much to the "Great Exemplar," however, as to the "Holy Living and Dying," and the "Contemplations on the State of Man." As a brief illustration, we may point to the following observations in the section on "Contentedness in all Estates and Accidents." We should like to know whether a bereaved parent or friend was ever very effectually consoled by such considerations as these.

"To cure which, [sorrow for a departed friend,] we may consider, that all the world must die, and therefore to be impatient at the death of a person, concerning whom it was certain and known that he must die, is to mourn, because thy friend or child was not born an angel; and, when thou hast awhile made thyself miserable by an importunate and useless grief, it may be thou shalt die thyself, and leave others to their choice, whether they will mourn for thee or no: but, by that time, it will appear, how impertinent that grief was, which served no end of life, and ended in thy own funeral. But what great matter is it, if sparks fly upward, or a stone falls into a pit; if that which was combustible be burned, or that which was liquid be melted, or that which is mortal do die? It is no more than a man does every day; for every night death hath gotten possession of that day, and we shall never live that day over again; and when the last day is come, there are no more days left for us to die."—"But (as concerning thy own particular) remove thy thoughts back to those days in which thy child was not born, and you are now, but as then you was, and there is no difference, but that you had a son born: and if you reckon that for evil, you are unthankful for the blessing; if it be good, it is better that you had the blessing for a while, than not at all; and yet, if he had never been born, this sorrow had not been at all."

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of the very subordinate motives to obedience, at a length very disproportioned to their relative magnitude and importance; and now and then, though not very often, to enforce great duties, or inculcate self-control, moderation, severity of manners, and contempt of the world, by a profuse employment of arguments, not false in themselves, but totally inefficacious; arguments which would better befit the pages of those stoical moralists, whom he so lavishly quotes, than those of a christian theologian; arguments which, if they are worthy of mention at all, might be glanced at with the utmost brevity; so inconsiderable is the influence they exert, compared with those grand and overpowering motives which the gospel supplies, which ought ever to be the principal incentives to "Holy Living and Dying," and the never-ceasing subjects of those who would teach the way either to the one or the other.

It may also be observed, that a more cautious style of *expression* would have been eminently desirable in many instances, to guard his readers against the error and the danger of supposing that there is some meritorious efficacy in their good deeds, or that heaven may be purchased by a certain amount of prayers and alms. It is certain, that Taylor's fixed and often repeated opinion was, that a christian's obedience flows simply from an unfeigned reception of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, and derives its whole value from the efficacy of Christ's work. It was stated in a preceding page that Jeremy Taylor was apt to express himself with extraordinary latitude and want of caution, and the causes of this peculiarity were pointed out; there are, perhaps, few of the instances of incautious expression referred to in the above work, which, when interpreted, as in all fairness they ought to be, by comparison with other portions of his writings, are not susceptible of a sound solution. Still there are some instances in which he cannot be vindicated from inconsistency of statement; while there are many others, in which, though he may have meant well, he has not expressed himself wisely.

To him, however, who peruses these works with correct views, and who habitually applies to them, as he goes on, the grand principles and doctrines of the gospel, there are few pieces of practical theology which may be rendered more profitable. They are evidently the productions of one who had attained very exalted views of that elevation and purity of character, which it is the object of christianity to form in all who embrace it; who himself panted to attain it; and who habitually, and diligently, and prayerfully used all those holy "arts," and "instruments," and "methods," which Infinite Wisdom has enjoined for the conservation and increase of piety. They are the works of one who knew much of human nature—of its infirmities, and its temptations; and of the whole science (and it is a profound one) of christian experience.

The "Life of Christ, or the Great Exemplar," is as characteristic both of Jeremy Taylor's peculiar excellences, and his peculiar defects, as any of his works; and it may be added, that it is one in which the former appear in the most attractive, and the latter in their least repulsive, forms. The chief excellences of Jeremy Taylor do not, as is well known even to his most superficial readers, consist in continuity of thought, or regularity of method, but in detached passages of exquisite beauty. Now, as the work in question is, in fact, nothing more or less than a number of devout meditations on the principal incidents of our Saviour's life, the qualities above mentioned are not much missed, because not much wanted.

The title of the work, "The History of the Life of Christ," can give the reader but a very imperfect, or rather an *erroneous*, idea of its nature or its contents. The "Great Exemplar," by which it is generally known, gives a much more correct impression. It is, as already stated, a series of devout reflections and meditations on the principal events in our Saviour's history. It is almost wholly practical, and has scarcely an observation of a critical nature in it. Nay, the author not only makes no attempt to elucidate the critical difficulties of the gospel narrative, or to harmonize apparent discrepancies, or to arrange the events of Christ's life in chronological order, but avails himself of the accounts, often most fabulous and absurd, which the traditions of the early ages have preserved respecting our Lord, his family, and his disciples.

Many of these "Discourses" are amongst the most beautiful and impressive specimens of Jeremy Taylor's eloquence. And it may be remarked, as a proof of the exuberance and fertility of his mind, that many of those "sections," which are on subjects apparently the most barren, are rich in vigorous thought and beautiful illustration. It is impossible not to admire, with what felicitous art,—with what originality,—he will often found, on the most trivial fact of sacred history, a train of the most impressive reflection. The reader may easily see an illustration of this remark, by turning to discourse the first, section third, on the "Duty of nursing Children in Imitation of the blessed Virgin Mother;" or the discourse, section fourth, entitled "Considerations of the Epiphany of the blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi;" and to the thoughts on "Meditation," which, by the by, with the exception of

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one or two incautious expressions, are characterized throughout by the profoundest wisdom, and the highest, because a sanctified and truly christian philosophy.

The next work was the "Holy Living and Dying;" it is probably the production by which he is best known. Its object, as appears by the dedication, was to furnish the members of the church of England ("then under a cloud") with a "help" to their piety and devotion, while unable to attend the regular ministrations of their own communion. It has very little in it, however, (and in this it resembles Jeremy Taylor's other practical writings,) which is not equally fit and equally unfit for every communion.

The "Holy Living" is divided into four chapters; the first is occupied with the "Consideration of the general Instruments and Means serving to a holy Life;" the second is on "Christian Sobriety;" the third on "Christian Justice;" the last on "Christian Religion." There is obviously some peculiarity in this arrangement, which is, however, easily accounted for. The very title of the second and third chapters shows that Jeremy Taylor never intended that *christian religion*, taken in its widest sense, is something exclusive of christian sobriety and justice; which are, in fact, only particular exhibitions of christian principles, in relation to certain personal and social duties. All the difficulty is avoided, by bearing in mind that Taylor here uses the word "religion," merely to designate its immediate acts and appropriate offices; all those which relate to the intercourse between the soul and God.

There is one false and pernicious speculation in this work, (at least so the present writer deems it,) which deserves specific mention. Jeremy Taylor's views on the subject of the sabbath were not such as have generally been held by the most sound divines. He believed that the command to observe any such day ceased with the Jewish dispensation; and that it is no longer matter of positive institution. He still contended, however, that such observance was a christian *duty*, resting it on apostolic precedents, on the usages and sanction of christian antiquity, and on ecclesiastical authority. Such an admission as this neutralized, in his particular case, all the mischievous effects which might otherwise flow from such an opinion. The same view of the subject is defended at greater length in the third book of the "Ductor Dubitantium."

The "Holy Dying" is divided into four chapters; the first is entitled, "A general Preparation towards a holy and blessed Death, by way of consideration;" the second, "A general Preparation towards a holy and blessed Death, by way of exercise;" the third, "Of the State of Sickness, and the Temptations incident to it, with their proper Remedies;" the fourth, "Of the Practice of the Graces proper to the State of Sickness, which a sick Man may practise alone."

The "Contemplations on the State of Man in this Life, and in that which is to come," is a posthumous work, and by no means equal to the "Life of Christ," or "Holy Living and Dying." It contains many passages of great splendour and beauty, but a more than usual display of vicious taste, a perverted rhetoric, and ill-applied learning. It is distributed into two books, corresponding to the great general divisions of the subject. Each book is prefaced by an address to the reader.

A portion of his Ενιαυτος, or year of sermons, was his next publication of any considerable size. The observations now about to be made, apply equally to all his discourses.

The "Sermons" of Jeremy Taylor are amongst the most valuable,—perhaps it might be affirmed that altogether they are the most valuable, of his writings. The reader has, however, been already fully forewarned that they are not strictly to be regarded as "*sermons*" at all. Of the deficiencies of Jeremy Taylor's genius in relation to pulpit eloquence, enough has been already said. If the remarks previously made be well founded, it could not but be expected that, considered strictly as discourses *intended to convince and persuade*, his sermons should be marked by very glaring defects. But the fact is, there is scarcely a single peculiarity of the *sermon* in them; there is no attempt at adaptation to a public audience. Nothing except the name, distinguishes them from compositions intended for the closet or the study.

There is not one of them, it is true, which does not contain much that is admirable and impressive, and which no audience could hear without profit; yet not only is there no special adaptation of *such matter* to a public discourse, not only might it with just as much propriety be introduced *unaltered* into theological disquisitions intended for private reading; but it is almost always combined with matter that ought by no means to be found in *sermons* at all. In none does he refrain from the most prodigal display of his erudition; Greek and Latin strew the pages (more particularly those of the sermons entitled the "Marriage Ring," "Apples of Sodom," and the "House of Feasting") as plentifully as in his works intended more especially for the learned. In none does he abstain from incidental discussion of the most profitless subjects of speculation, if they chance to suggest themselves amidst more important matter.

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It has indeed been plausibly conjectured by Bishop Heber, that the "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor were not delivered precisely in the form in which they were printed; that, in at least one respect, they were somewhat modified previous to publication. So profuse are his quotations from learned authors, that his biographer thinks it impossible that any man could be guilty of the absurdity of adducing them in the hearing of an illiterate audience;* that they must, therefore, have been suppressed on the actual delivery of the "sermons," and introduced only when they were given to the world. It may be admitted, indeed, that there is considerable plausibility in this conjecture; and if we were to measure the habits of that age by our own, or even by the dictates of common sense, the conjecture would appear abundantly probable. But so universal was the practice of learned quotation in those days, so infinitely absurd the tricks which profound erudition could play in the pulpit, that there appears nothing incredible in the supposition, that Jeremy Taylor interlarded his discourses, even when first delivered, with all the edifying scraps of Greek and Latin which are now found in them. Nor is he, after all, more frequently guilty of this practice (in proportion to his learning) than the generality of the preachers of the age. They, so far as we may judge by their writings, never spared their Greek and Latin any more than did Jeremy Taylor; the only difference appears to have been, that they could not afford to be so profuse. They quoted up to the measure of *their* learning, and he up to the measure of *his*.

If, then, we may judge by the universal practice of Taylor's contemporaries, the hypothesis of Bishop Heber is not sustained by sufficient proof; unless, indeed, we also imagine—of which there is not the vestige of any evidence, but decisive evidence to the contrary—that his contemporaries also restrained the flow of their learning when in the pulpit, and merely indulged it when preparing their discourses for the press.

The most astounding fact connected with this practice is yet to be mentioned. There is but too conclusive proof, that in many instances the taste of the audience was as vicious as that of the preacher. They were often not content with "sermons," unless they were adorned with the spoils of at least two or three learned languages, nor thought themselves fully edified, unless they heard a few things which they could not understand.

Probably, the preachers of that day thought it a sufficient excuse for the practice, that the quotations with which they bedizened their sermons were generally *translated* as soon as uttered. Jeremy Taylor has almost universally adopted this custom in his printed sermons, and indeed in almost all his writings. This was, it may be conceded, some palliation of the folly; but nothing can be urged as a sufficient justification of it. It is truly wonderful that it should have prevailed so generally and lasted so long.

Jeremy Taylor's "sermons," however, as already stated more than once, are not to be viewed as sermons, but as eloquent theological disquisitions, adapted to practical purposes and to private reading; and in this point of view, they are well worthy of frequent and earnest perusal. They are, on the whole, probably more thoroughly imbued with his characteristic excellences than any of his other writings, and have no more than the usual portion of his defects. As to these latter, some of the observations made on his "Life of Christ" apply with equal force to his "sermons." In these short pieces his irregularity of method and his abrupt transitions of thought, are of less consequence than in his larger works.

The "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor are sixty-four in all: of which the fifty-two which compose the Ενιαυτος, and three of the "supplementary sermons," (published some time after the yearly course appeared,) are on general subjects. The remaining nine were all preached on special occasions.

All these sermons abound in detached passages of the sublimest and loftiest eloquence, on all those topics which, as already intimated in a previous part of this Essay, Jeremy Taylor was so peculiarly well qualified to treat. Though not free from occasional inaccuracies, and in some instances chargeable with serious inconsistencies of statement, they are full of the noblest christian philosophy; of the most captivating descriptions of the grandeur and glory of the gospel, as a system for the renovation and purification of our nature; of its tendencies to elevate and ennoble humanity; of the beauty and glory of spiritual excellence in all its forms; of its universal harmony with the well-being of all intellectual existence. Nor has he shown himself less profoundly acquainted with all the deformity and obliquities of that depraved heart which the blessed system of the gospel was designed to renovate. He has furnished us with the most deeply affecting descriptions, not only of the more appalling exhibitions of wickedness and vice, but of those more subtle forms under which it lies hid in the recesses of the soul, and not unfrequently under the mask of a

* These sermons were preached at Golden Grove, in Wales.

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spurious virtue, or even in close alliance with excellence that is real. He has also, as in his other practical works, shown himself deeply skilled in christian experience, and in a knowledge of all the instruments and methods of spiritual discipline, for attaining greater elevation of piety and higher degrees of holiness.

The most splendid and eloquent of these wonderful discourses are, "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy;" "The Faith and Patience of the Saints, or the righteous Cause oppressed;" "Doomsday Book, or Christ's Advent to Judgment;" "The descending and entailed Curse cut off;" "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments, or God's Method of curing Sinners;" "The House of Feasting, or the Epicure's Measures;" "The Apples of Sodom, or the Fruits of Sin;" and "The Foolish Exchange."

Amongst the most beautiful and impressive may be classed the "Return of Prayers;" "The Flesh and the Spirit;" "The Righteousness evangelical described."

But those which, perhaps, are the most edifying and *uniformly* excellent of the whole, are the sermons "On Growth in Grace, with its proper instruments and signs," and "Growth in Sin, or the several states and degrees of sinners, with the manner how they are to be treated." It is singular that his biographer has mentioned the latter of these with distinct approbation, but not the former; whereas, as it appears to us, the former are far more excellent, though not perhaps quite so striking. They exhibit greater sobriety of style, as well as more uniform excellence of matter, than any other discourses in the whole series.

The sermons on "Christian Prudence," more especially the first and second parts, and those on "Christian Simplicity," are full of practical wisdom and of a truly sanctified philosophy. In the last sermon on "Christian Prudence," he has an amusing opportunity of *exemplifying* the principles for which he is contending. In his advice as to "choosing a religious guide," he has, of course, occasion to refer to the peculiarities of many of the sects of the day: in so doing he has followed his own advice given in a preceding part of the discourse, "that we should not by an indiscreet zeal cast ourselves into a needless danger," and that we should often reprove the errors of others, not by a distinct mention of those who hold them, but by "categorical propositions and abstracted declarations."

By the way, we may observe that this sermon has one not very complimentary reference to Milton. Amongst the imitators and successors of the Nicolaitans, the Carpocratians, the Gnostics, and "all their impure branches," he reckons those who maintain, "that we are not tied to the law of commandments; that the law of grace is a law of liberty; and that liberty is to do what we list; *that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes.*"

Perhaps the sermons most characteristic are those entitled "The Marriage Ring, or the Mysteriousness and Duties of Marriage," and the "House of Feasting, or the Epicure's Measures."

Of the sermons preached on special occasions, it is not necessary to say any thing further. That on the "Gunpowder Plot" was his earliest publication, and though it has some fine passages, it is, as might be expected, far more strongly marked by his characteristic extravagancies and his florid rhetoric, than his subsequent productions.

The "Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the blessed Sacrament," first published in 1655, and his "Dissuasive from Popery," which was the last considerable work of his life, but is introduced here as belonging to the papistical controversy, are by far the most successful of his polemical efforts. The former will more than sustain comparison with any of the works published on the much controverted subject on which it treats; and the latter is probably surpassed by no work in our language, if we except Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants."

The former of these able treatises is divided into thirteen sections; the points he endeavours to establish are these: that "transubstantiation is not warranted by scripture;" here he enters into a very full and acute examination of all the passages alleged in the controversy; "that it is against *sense;*" "that it is wholly without or against *reason;*" and "that it was not the doctrine of the primitive church." The most powerful sections are the fourth, fifth, and sixth, in which he examines the "words of institution;" the ninth, in which he shows, from the universal language of scripture, that the words of institution are not to be interpreted literally but figuratively; the tenth and eleventh, in which he shows that the doctrine he controverts is alike contradicted by the senses and by reason; and the twelfth, in which he most triumphantly proves that transubstantiation was not the belief of the primitive church. Here his immense learning is displayed to great advantage.

It is a pity, however, that Taylor should have introduced the word "*real*" into his treatise at all.

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Though the innocence of his meaning is shown by the most abundant explanation, yet it is not true in any tolerable sense of the word "*really*," that Christ's body is *really* in the sacrament. All that he means is, as himself contends, that Christ's body is *figuratively* there; which is just as much as admitting that he has used the word "really" in an improper sense.

The "Dissuasive from Popery," as already intimated, was published, after Taylor's elevation to the episcopal chair, at the request of the whole body of Irish bishops, who thought that some able and popular treatise on the subject might be useful to the common people, and tend to abate the nuisance of popery. In requesting *Jeremy Taylor* to write such a treatise, they surely forgot either the object they had in view, or the character of the man to whom they applied. It was as though a deputation had waited on Sir Isaac Newton, with a request that he would be pleased to compile an elementary book of arithmetic for the use of the lower forms in schools. Even if Jeremy Taylor had produced the treatise they wanted, at the best it would have been only what a far inferior genius might have supplied quite as well. But admirable as Taylor's genius was, it was not in his nature to write any thing of an "ad populum" cast on such a subject.

The result was such as might have been expected. The "Dissuasive" is a conclusive work on the subject on which it treats, but fit only for the learned; and as little capable of being understood or appreciated by vulgar readers, as the "Ductor Dubitantium." It is divided into two parts; the second is prefaced by an introduction, in which he replies to the animadversions of an anonymous popish antagonist, who had published some strictures on the first part. The first part consists of three chapters, in the first of which he shows that "The doctrine of the Romish Church, in the controverted articles, is neither catholic, apostolic, nor primitive;" in the second, that "The Church of Rome, as it is at this day disordered, teaches doctrines, and uses practices, which are in themselves, or in their true and immediate consequences, direct impieties, and give warranty to a wicked life;" in the third, that "The Church of Rome teaches doctrines, which in many things are destructive of christian society in general, and of monarchy in special; both which, the religion of the church of England and Ireland does, by her doctrines, greatly and christianly support." Of these, the first chapter, as might be expected, shows Taylor's immense reading to the best advantage; though the second is, perhaps, on other grounds, the most powerful. Those sections which are entitled "On the Doctrine of Indulgences;" "Purgatory;" "Public Prayer denied to the common people in a language they understand;" "On picturing God and the Trinity;" "The Roman Doctrines of Repentance, Penances, and Satisfactions;" "The Roman Doctors differ as to the efficiency of Indulgences;" "Roman Errors in reference to Prayer;" "Effects of worshipping Images;" are, perhaps, the most admirable.

The second part is divided into two books, in which he views many of the same subjects under other aspects, and reiterates and confirms former statements. The sections on "Traditions;" "Of the sufficiency of the Scriptures;" "On the expurgatory Indices in the Roman Church;" "On auricular Confession;" are all excellent.

The style of these treatises on the Roman catholic controversy is very superior to that of his other polemical pieces. It possesses both more polish and more vigour; while the dull learning and dry argument are relieved by much vivacity, wit, and humour. Some passages, as specimens of these qualities, have already been cited in a former part of this Essay.

"The Doctrine and Practice of Repentance," as its very title imports, is partly theological and controversial, partly practical. In pursuance of this design, each section of the work is followed by some appropriate meditation or prayer.

It is this work which contains Taylor's singular speculations on the subject of original sin. They form the seventh chapter. On this chapter a few remarks will be made, after the general merits and defects of the work have been briefly pointed out.

To none of Jeremy Taylor's pieces are those remarks which have been already made on Taylor's character, as a theologian, more completely applicable, than to the present; it is most strongly marked both by his peculiar defects as a speculative writer and by his excellences as a teacher of practical piety. Much of what is purely controversial and doctrinal is false, or, at best, dubious; while the large portion of what is practical is calculated to be eminently useful. So much is this the case, that even his errors, with respect to the doctrine of "original sin," are in a great measure neutralized, by the strong admissions which, when simply inculcating the lessons of piety, he often makes of human weakness and depravity, and of the absolute necessity of the illumination and influences of divine grace, to renovate and purify our

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nature. Under the deep and humbling consciousness of human infirmity he forgets, or seems to forget, his speculative theology.

The work is divided into ten chapters, the first of which treats of the "Foundation and Necessity of Repentance;" the second, "Of the nature and definition of Repentance; and what parts of duty are signified by it in Holy Scripture;" the third, "Of the distinction of Sins, mortal and venial; in what sense to be admitted; and how the smallest sins are to be repented of and expiated;" a chapter in which he explodes, in an admirable manner, the absurd distinctions of the papists; the fourth treats of "actual single sins, and what repentance is proper to them;" the fifth, "of habitual sins, and their manner of eradication and cure, and their proper instruments of pardon;" the sixth and seventh, on "concupiscence and original sin; and whether or no, or how far, we are bound to repent of it;" the eighth, "of sins of infirmity;" the ninth, "of the effect of repentance; namely, the remission of sins;" the last, "of ecclesiastical penance, or the fruits of repentance."

Of these, the first, the second, third, fourth, and eighth, are decidedly the best. Section the second, of the first chapter, "of the possibility or impossibility of keeping the precepts of the gospel," is on the whole exceedingly acute, and contains statements and admissions which, pursued to their legitimate consequences, virtually refute his theory on the subject of original sin. Most of the other chapters contain many things which are decidedly erroneous; many others which must be received with caution; and many more still, which are stated with that want of precision which has so often been represented as characteristic of this great writer, and as demanding, in every reader who would do him justice, eminent candour, an enlarged acquaintance with his works, and a liberal interpretation of particular points.

The *manner* in which he introduces the subject of "original sin," in this treatise, a subject which might, at first sight, appear to have no immediate connection with its principal topics, is sufficiently apparent from the statement just given of its contents. The slightest glance at that statement shows how the seventh chapter is connected with the rest. Taylor was led into the discussion by the desire of ascertaining whether original sin be a "*sin*" in the *ordinary* sense of that word, and whether, as a consequence, man is or is not obliged to *repent* of it.

That "original sin" is not "sin" in the ordinary sense of the word; that in this connection it is used in a peculiar and technical sense; that it is not the best word that could have been employed for the purpose; and that, as "original sin" is not sin in the ordinary sense, no man can repent of it in the ordinary sense of repentance,—are points, which are now almost universally conceded by theologians on both sides of this intricate question. And, perhaps, a candid interpretation of the language of those whom Taylor opposed, might have convinced him that, even in his day, there was sufficient agreement on these points, to absolve him from the necessity of discussing such a topic in a "Treatise on Repentance." He appears, however, to have thought otherwise.

The principal cause of Jeremy Taylor's errors on this subject are sufficiently apparent from a careful perusal of his treatise. It is evident that he was driven to adopt the extreme opinions by his horror of those who had *really*, or as he imagined, pushed the doctrine of original sin to pernicious and dangerous consequences; especially those who contended that even infants might be eternally condemned for the transgression of our first parents. That there have been some theologians who have maintained this fearful paradox, we admit; and such men Jeremy Taylor has satisfactorily confuted, by arguments which, it need not be said, have nothing to do with his peculiar theory of original sin. That there have been a still greater number of theologians, who have expressed themselves with most eminent want of caution, and even with culpable negligence on this subject, we are as little disposed to deny. Still we cannot help thinking that, *in the majority of instances*, carelessness and negligence are all with which they are chargeable, and that they would have recoiled, as cordially as did Taylor himself, from the horrible consequences which he attaches to their doctrine. This seems evident from the fact that, if we may judge from the general strain of their writings, they by no means contend that Adam's posterity are condemned *irrespectively* of their own moral state, or the actual development of the evil tendencies of our common nature; clearly showing, that when they say that all are condemned in Adam as the federal head of his race, they only mean that, as all his posterity morally resemble him, it is just to treat them as he is treated; that he is with propriety regarded as a specimen of the class; that, consequently, if any individual of our race could be found, who had lived in undeviating obedience to the Divine law, he would in no sense be condemned for Adam's sin; in other words, *that none are finally condemned for Adam's sin alone.*

This great truth is, we believe, now generally admitted both by Calvinists and Arminians. If there are

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any who deny it, it may be freely conceded that they fall under the triumphant arguments by which Jeremy Taylor has refuted this enormous error.

If Taylor had stopped here, he would have done well; but in the prosecution of his argument he has gone much further. In his eagerness to vindicate the Divine government, he has been betrayed into speculations by no means necessary to the refutation of the errors which filled him with such indignation; speculations equally at variance with Scripture and with fact; and which, even if admitted to be founded in truth, would leave this stupendous difficulty just where they found it.

His theory is briefly this:—that man's nature is totally untouched by the fall: that he now enters the world in precisely the same state in which Adam first came from the hand of his Creator; with neither more nor less of moral excellence; with an equal power of standing or of falling; that the great advantage which Adam possessed was not in any original superiority of nature, but in certain "*supernatural*" communications of grace bestowed, so long as he continued obedient, over and above all those native endowments which belonged to him as a creature: that, on his fall, these supernatural communications were withdrawn, and have never been vouchsafed to his descendants. Of this reasoning, it may be safely affirmed, first, that the *premises* are all pure assumptions; and secondly, that even if they were not so, they would leave the main difficulties of the question still unsolved.

As to the *premises*,—it is needless to remind the reader that the Scripture says not one syllable of these "supernatural endowments," with which God is supposed to have succoured the *originally* infirm nature of our first parent; a nature which, on Taylor's hypothesis, God himself is supposed to have created as weak as our own. This supposition, as will be hereafter shown, has as disastrous an aspect on the Divine attributes of goodness and benevolence, as the errors which, on these very grounds, it was Taylor's avowed object to confute.—It may, moreover, be remarked, that the general strain of Scripture, fairly and honestly interpreted, inevitably leads to the supposition that the nature of Adam was *originally* transcendently superior to what it was after his fall, or than that which any of his descendants have possessed since.

But these *premises*, even if facts, would leave the main difficulties of the question just where they were.

In the first place, it may be observed that if obedience is, as Taylor contends, impracticable, *impossible*, without such *supernatural* aids as Adam possessed; in other words, if man is created with such a nature as that his disobedience is inevitable, unless he be succoured with such "grace" as God has not vouchsafed, then it will be to the full as difficult to vindicate the justice and goodness of God in having created such a being, and still more in punishing him for disobedience, to him inevitable, as in the conduct which the more received hypotheses on the subject of original sin impute to the Divine Being. Secondly, it is evident that Taylor's hypothesis really supposes man's nature as deeply injured by the "original transgression," as does that of his opponents; for if, as he imagines, those supernatural aids which were vouchsafed to Adam, were sufficient to compensate for all the deficiencies of nature, and that they *would* have been vouchsafed to his descendants, had he not fallen, it is obvious that the injury inflicted on them is as great as though their very nature had received the shock which it is truly supposed to have received. So long as man is placed by Adam's fall in circumstances which render his sinning *inevitable*, (as Taylor admits,) it little matters whether this is immediately occasioned by an *external* or an *internal* injury; by the withdrawal of preternatural graces or by an actual depravation of our native faculties.

Indeed, so long as the great fact is admitted, (as it now usually is,) that man, by the fall of Adam, is such or so situated, that he will as surely sin as that he exists; the great difficulty remains where it was, whatever hypothesis be formed as to the *mode* in which the injury has been sustained. That difficulty is,—to show how it can consist with justice and equity, that the moral state of one being should be inevitably determined by his dependence on another. That such is the case with man, is abundantly proved by *fact*, and is confirmed by a thousand analogous cases, which present themselves throughout the whole of created nature, the great law of which is *mutual dependence*. The virtue and the vice, the joys and the sorrows, the happiness and the misery of this lower creation are intertwined in one inextricable web. The difficulty is evidently to be met, not by the construction of any such unsatisfactory hypothesis as that of Jeremy Taylor. The only answer of which the case admits,—and even in our present imperfect state of knowledge, it is sufficient to confirm our faith, if not to satisfy our curiosity,—is, that no man will be condemned for original sin alone, but for sins which, even with all our infirmities and all our natural depravity, it was our duty to have avoided and our guilt that we have committed.

Precisely the same observations apply to the controversies which have been carried on with respect to

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the *extent* of the injury sustained in consequence of the original transgression. The question of the "more or the less" is surely of little importance, so long as all admit, that the injury is of *such* a nature as inevitably leads to a state of transgression, which, without the redeeming efficacy of the gospel, will for ever exclude us from the favour of God. An aggravation of *this*, it might be imagined, it would be not very easy to conceive; and as to any extenuation of it, while this tremendous consequence remains, —all that can be offered is less than the dust in the balance. On this point we cannot refrain from citing the judicious observations of Bishop Heber.

"The fact is, indeed, that with the allowances which all these divines have made,—the difference between their view of man's corruption, and that which is taken by the Calvinists, is not, as to any practical consequence, worth disputing. Both sides allow that man is so far fallen as to be unable, without grace, to rise to heaven or escape everlasting punishment; and Taylor, in particular, has, in many of his argumentative and all his devotional passages, admitted, in the humblest language, his vileness, his helplessness, his worthlessness. But, if the ruin be effectual, it signifies little whether it be total; and if man is by nature the heir of wrath, it is a question of very inferior importance, whether there may or may not be some scattered good qualities yet remaining about him, which may make a difference in his final lot, so far at least as a mitigation of punishment."

In attempting to get rid of the main difficulty against the hypothesis that our nature is still just what it was before the fall,—namely, the *universal* wickedness of human nature, Jeremy Taylor falls into an amusing fallacy. He reasons in a circle. He argues that this *universal* wickedness is the effect of "evil education and immoral examples;" as though these were any thing more than particular *exhibitions* of that very depravity of which they are offered as a sufficient solution, or, as though an effect could be the cause of itself. At the very best, such a statement only removes the difficulty one step further back, reminding one of that sage system of Indian cosmogony, in which the earth is represented as upborne on the back of an elephant and the elephant on an enormous tortoise. The question immediately returns, "And what supports the tortoise?" In like manner, it may be asked in the present case, What causes that *universal* prevalence of evil education and evil example, which are supposed to account for the universality of human wickedness?

It has been already remarked, that this incautious speculation was of little consequence in Taylor's particular case; his deep and unfeigned humility, his habitual and profound consciousness of his own infirmities, and of the difficulties which impede all progress in holiness and virtue, prevented the pernicious effects which might otherwise have followed from his system, and serve to show how far asunder a man's speculative belief and his practical sentiments may often be. In this instance, he reminds one of what he himself beautifully observes of certain classes of religionists, in his sermon on "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy," "that they are often innocently and invincibly mistaken, and mean nothing but truth; and that while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory."

The "Ductor Dubitantium, or Rule of Conscience," which is the last work which demands any particular observations, is the most voluminous of all Jeremy Taylor's productions, yet of inferior practical utility to almost any of the rest. It is that on which he expended most time and labour; that in which his great genius and his prodigious learning are most prodigally displayed; above all, it was the work to which he himself looked as the basis of his fame, and which he accordingly elaborated with the most unwearied diligence.

In this expectation he completely deceived himself; for there is not a production of his pen which is not more read than this great work of casuistry. His error, however, consisted in an ill choice of his subject, not in his mode of treating it. A *minute* treatise on casuistry is not to be rendered attractive; there is a radical vice in the subject, which no power of genius can fully obviate. Jeremy Taylor, indeed, has done all that mortal man could do to enliven and adorn it; but not even the magic of *his* genius could render it generally interesting. It is sufficient praise, that it is by far the *least repulsive* work on the subject that has ever been given to the world.

One great reason of the general neglect into which this work has fallen, is, that people no longer feel an interest in by far the greater number of the discussions to which it relates. In his estimate of the importance of such discussions, Jeremy Taylor committed a great error.

The fact is, he thought that the nation stood in much greater need of casuistry, than was really the case. It was true, indeed, (as he complains,) that protestants *had* generally neglected the study of this uninviting science, and that, while the Romish church, with whose writers he was so familiar and

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from whom he contracted much of his taste for casuistical theology, possessed numberless works on this subject, protestants could hardly point to one. He should have remembered, however, that this very neglect was, if not the result of a deliberate judgment of the comparative insignificance of the science, a necessary consequence of a return to the simplicity of the christian system as developed in the New Testament, and a hearty adoption of those comprehensive laws of morals, which it has delivered to us ;—laws which, for the most part, are of such easy application to the actual circumstances of life. It is true, that in the infinite complexity and ever-changing relations of human affairs, there will still be, even in spite of the most attentive study of the great rules of the New Testament, aye, or even of the most voluminous systems of casuistry, many cases of much intricacy and of difficult solution. These, however, will form a very small proportion, compared with those to which the great principles of the New Testament are immediately applicable ; while even of these exceptions, there are few on which the judgment cannot come to a satisfactory decision, if the heart be but sincere and honest in its inquiries after truth ; and, above all, if it be rendered (as it will be by such a disposition) anxious to take the *safe* side of every practical difficulty, and willing rather to forego some advantage, than snatch at it with a possible violation of what is right. And as to difficulties connected with *religion*,—the subject which has hitherto been far more fruitful of casuistical discussion than any other,—there is hardly a single case of importance that is not determined by a simple recurrence to the divine simplicity of the New Testament. He who habitually believes that " God looketh on the heart ;" that *thence* are the " fountains of life ;" that the essence of good and evil actions is the motive from which they are performed ; that the circumstances of actions are always less important than the actions themselves ; that the means derive their sole dignity and value from the end, and not the end from the means ; that though the external duties of religion are all to be performed, it is purely to promote the spiritual life of the soul, and that, consequently, their importance is always to be estimated by the great purpose they are designed to serve ; and above all, that in doubtful cases it is always better to lose a little than to endanger all ; to take always that road which we *know* is nearest to heaven and to greater degrees of purity and holiness than one of the direction of which we are in a degree uncertain ;—he, who habitually carries with him these principles, and a few more of like comprehensive import, may safely dispense with the wearisome discussions and frivolous distinctions of a minute and unprofitable casuistry. These are the " great lights " which rule the day, and, so long as they are above the horizon, render needless that dim and dubious light which is all that can reach us from the brightest luminaries of casuistical science.

Thus, then, if protestants neglected this science, it was because the grand principles they embraced placed them above the necessity of frequently appealing to it. They had removed into a well-built and commodious habitation, and no longer needed the clumsy buttresses which were necessary to support the vast, ill-compacted, and ruinous tenement of the church of Rome.

But when, as amongst the ancient Jews, or in the Romish church, all the above grand principles of ethics are subverted ; when vice and virtue are subjected to weight and measure ; when duties are exchanged and bartered, like any other commodities ; when merit and holiness are bought and sold by the pound and the bushel ; when the external circumstances of actions are magnified into greater importance than the actions themselves ; when the modes of duty are represented as more essential than the duties of which they are the instruments or the expressions ; when the great object of the whole system of religion is not only to enable men to do all, however doubtful, that they may lawfully do, but even to encourage them in doing what is unlawful with a secure conscience, and to reconcile eternal felicity with every earthly gratification ; and when for this purpose recourse is had to an infinity of subtle distinctions ;—it is no wonder that books of casuistry are multiplied, and that guides are rendered necessary for threading those intricate and mazy labyrinths, which themselves have first constructed to perplex mankind. The former evil is a necessary consequence of the latter ; such voluminous casuistry is an artificial remedy for difficulties equally artificial. As the whole system is full of snares for the conscience, so it was necessary to invent methods of releasing it from its perpetual entanglements and perplexities. But protestants, no longer exposed to the same dangers, no longer need the same securities. In consequence, a comparatively small part of Jeremy Taylor's work is taken up with those matters which, in the books of the Romish casuists, constitute the principal part of the cases of conscience.

The " Ductor Dubitantium " is divided into four books. The first treats of " Conscience, the kinds of it, and the general rules of conducting them." Under this he treats, in distinct chapters, " Of the Rule of Conscience in general ;" " Of the right or sure Conscience ;" " Of the confident or erroneous Conscience ;"

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"Of the probable or thinking Conscience;" "Of a doubtful Conscience;" and "Of a scrupulous Conscience."

These chapters, on the whole, form, in the view of the present writer, the most valuable part of the work. Bishop Heber prefers the last book, on the "causes of good and evil; their limits and circumstances; their aggravations and diminutions;" but though very admirable, few, we apprehend, will think it equal to the first, either in general merit or practical utility; not to mention that these introductory chapters contain, either directly or by implication, most of what is found in the last book. The general remarks about to be made on the one, however, will apply to both.

The first book, it will be seen, is in fact preliminary to what is, more strictly speaking, the casuistical portion of the work; and the last is supplementary. But it is precisely this circumstance which renders these books so interesting and valuable; they are taken up, for the most part, in the discussion and establishment of great general principles,—principles to be afterwards applied to particular cases. They may, consequently, be read with benefit by every body. Indeed, as Jeremy Taylor aptly and wittily observes, at the close of the chapter on a doubtful conscience, "these advices or discourses of conscience in general, are intended but as directions how to take our physic, and what order to observe 'in diebus custodiæ;' but the determining the several doubts is like preparing and administering the medicines, which consist of very many ingredients."

Throughout these preliminary discussions, Jeremy Taylor contends for the great principle—without which, indeed, any consistent theory of human duty is impossible—that conscience, that is, the conviction that such and such actions are a *duty*, always *obliges*, whether it be rightly informed or not. The firmness with which he grasps this great maxim, shows that he had profoundly considered the whole question of the grounds of human obligation, and forms a striking contrast to the hesitating and contradictory manner in which many ethical writers have held the same doctrine.* It is true that, at first sight, *it appears* a dangerous admission, that conscience binds to the performance of an action intrinsically wrong, and consequently absolves from guilt in reference to that *particular action performed at such a bidding*. Yet all danger is removed by the consideration, that though no man is bound to attain clearer views of truth than he can, and consequently cannot be blamed for doing what his conscience, at the very time of action, sincerely tells him it is his duty to do, he is answerable for every instance in which he has neglected the proper means and opportunities of rightly informing himself or in which he has willingly shut his eyes, lest he should be set right; that wherever the action need not be immediately performed, he is bound to reconsider the grounds of it; that in all cases of habitual conduct, where the slightest doubt remains within or is suggested from without, he is bound to traverse the reasons of his conduct and to hold himself always ready to receive fresh light from whatsoever quarter it may be offered; that so far as he neglects any of these means of informing his conscience, he is accessory to its abuse; and, by consequence, in that degree, guilty; and that it is only absolutely unavoidable error which absolves the man from all guilt, both as regards the intrinsically evil action which he performs, and the mental process by which he arrived at the conclusion that he ought to perform it. Whenever this absolutely unavoidable error does exist indeed, the man is absolved from all guilt; and by parity of reason, his guilt is diminished as his opportunities of correct information were small, and the difficulties of attaining it great. To say otherwise, is to contradict all the cardinal principles of morals; it is to affirm that a man is guilty of what he cannot avoid; and that not only *moral* but *physical* necessity may be compatible with crime. The above great principles, therefore, Jeremy Taylor firmly holds throughout the whole of these preliminary books on Conscience; and they have imparted unusual clearness and consistency to his speculations. They have shed a guiding light over many of the intricate questions which come under discussion in the subsequent parts of the work.

The most valuable portions of these preliminary chapters appear to us to be,—rule iii. chap. i., on which he gives cautions against mistaking "prejudice or passion, fancy and affection, error or illusion, for conscience;"—rule iii. chap. ii., entitled, "The practical Judgment of a Right Conscience is always agreeable to the speculative determination of the Understanding;" in which will be found the admirable discussion already referred to, on the limits of faith and reason;—rule viii. of the same chapter, entitled, "He that sins against a right and sure Conscience, whatever the instance be, commits a great sin, but not a double

* A highly intelligent friend lately pointed out to the present writer a beautiful Latin ode of the great Barrow, in which he as fully and fearlessly maintains the same fundamental principle. It is entitled, "Conscientia erronea obligat," and will be found in the eighth volume of the octavo edition of his Works, published at Oxford, 1830.

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one;" and in which he confutes the notion of the Roman casuists, that it was lawful for a judge, or other public functionary, to act against the conscience, provided such conduct was according to law;—the close of rule ix. of the same chapter, in which he examines, with great acuteness, "what changes may be made in moral actions by the persuasion and voice of conscience," and in which he establishes the important principle, "that conscience hath power in obligations and necessities, but not so much nor so often in permissions;" in other words, that we *must* do what she commands, but it does not follow that we are always right in doing all that she does not condemn.

The most impressive parts of chap. iii. are,—rule ii., "An erroneous Conscience binds us to Obedience;"—rule iii. that "An erring Conscience is a cause of Sin;"—rule iv. "That it is a greater Sin to do a good Action against our Conscience, than an evil Action in obedience to it;"—rule vi. "That Conscience is to be obeyed even against the Command of our Superiors."

The most valuable rules in the fourth chapter, which is on "The probable or thinking Conscience," are,—the second, entitled "A probable Conscience may be made certain;"—the fourth, "An Opinion speculatively probable is not always practically the same;"—the sixth, "While two Opinions remain equally probable, the last Determination is to be made by collateral Inducements;"—and the fifteenth, "The probable Sentence of a prudent Man is more than a probable Warranty to Actions otherwise undeterminable."

The fifth chapter is "Of a doubtful Conscience," and every part of it is well worthy of attentive perusal. But, perhaps, the most judicious, and certainly the most eloquent, of these introductory chapters, is the last, which is on "The scrupulous Conscience," the whole of which is excellent.

These admirable chapters do not contain any great principles absolutely false, yet they contain some false applications of principles in themselves true. Of these the chief which occur to us are, his incautious admission that it is not absolutely unlawful to enter on the ministry, the party having for the first and immediate design temporal support and maintenance;* his equally incautious admission that it is allowable in some cases to attempt to persuade men to the belief of a true proposition, by arguments with which the party himself is not persuaded, and which he believes are not sufficient;† his strange admission, in the same rule, (and after much admirable reasoning on the same subject,) "that it is in some cases right to frighten children and fools, and all those whose understanding is little better," by false terrors, "to their own good," if the matter cannot be managed in a better way. His language is curious enough.

"To children and fools, and all those whose understanding is but a little better, it hath been in all ages practised, that they be affrighted with mormoes and bugbears, that they may be cozened into good. But this is therefore permitted, because other things which are real, certain, or probable, cannot be understood or perceived by them: and therefore these things are not to be permitted, where it can well be otherwise. If it cannot, it is fit that their understandings should be conducted thither where they ought to go, and by such instruments as can be useful."

To these may be added, some parts of rule v. of the first chapter of the third book, in justification of certain instances of fraud and deception.

The titles of the remaining books are as follows:—"Of the Laws Divine, and all collateral obligations."—"Of human Laws, their obligation and relaxation; and of the collateral, indirect, and accidental bands of Conscience."—"Of the Nature and Causes of Good and Evil, their limits and circumstances, their aggravations and diminutions."

Of the contents of these books it is hardly necessary to offer any distinct analysis. The most tempting bill of fare, which the most enthusiastic admirers of such delicacies—and there are not many such epicures in our days—could prepare for the reader, would be totally insufficient to stimulate his languid appetite. The reason is obvious. Though these "books" contain many discussions of a curious, and some of an important nature, a very large proportion of them turn on matters which, however interesting in the days of Taylor, are totally insignificant in ours. Many of the popular prejudices which then gave rise to scruples of conscience, exist no longer; and many of the errors which then lingered in the public mind, errors so inveterate that nothing but the revolution of ages could remove them, have yielded to the progress of public opinion. Thus, for example,—whether it be "lawful or not to eat blood-puddings;" whether there be any

* In rule v. chap. ii. entitled, "When two motives concur to the determination of an action, whereof one is virtuous and the other secular, a right conscience is not prejudiced by the mixture." The general strain of the section accords with truth.

† In rule vi. chap. ii.—Yet the principal part of the rule is excellent.

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sufficient reason to "forbid cousins-german to marry;"* whether the Jewish sabbath is of perpetual observance or the christian sabbath designed to supersede it; whether it is lawful under any circumstances to worship images; whether the people are entitled to partake of the eucharist in both kinds or only in one; whether the pope or any one else "has any power to dispense in the laws of Christ;" whether the Lent fast has any claim to be considered either as a tradition or canon apostolical; whether bishops and priests may marry;† whether passive obedience and non-resistance are duties of the subject or not, (for the affirmative of which Jeremy Taylor, as a devoted loyalist, most strenuously contends,) are questions which will minister matter of scruple to very few in the present day. All the above questions, with the exception of the last, Taylor decides, it is true, according to the principles of truth and of common sense; but then, unfortunately for his popularity, the bulk of mankind in the present day do not need such elaborate reason to convince them. In all these books, however, more especially the third, which treats of "Human Laws and their Obligations," the philosophical spirit of Jeremy Taylor is constantly displaying itself; he is perpetually ascending from matters of transient or local interest to principles of universal and permanent importance.

Such is a brief view of the principal productions of this extraordinary genius. There are two or three smaller pieces, such as his "Discourse on Friendship" (on the whole one of the happiest efforts of his pen); his posthumous piece, entitled "Christian Consolations;" his "Divine Institution of the Office Ministerial;" his "Rules and Advices for the Clergy;" and his "Golden Grove;" on which it is not deemed necessary to offer any further observations. They are all, however, worthy of perusal, for Jeremy Taylor's most casual productions are all impressed with the peculiar, the characteristic splendours of his genius.

* This question, as sufficiently appears by the elaborate manner in which Jeremy Taylor has treated it, ministered matter of scruple to many in that day. Such is the force of prejudice. There are still some absurd prejudices more or less prevalent with respect to the "prohibited degrees of marriage," fostered by certain parts of the canon law; these prejudices, however, are fast yielding, like those which once respected "the marriages of cousins-german."

† These, and a great many other questions, which properly belong to the popish controversy, are incidentally treated by Taylor in this great work; clearly showing the truth of a remark previously made,—that to "protestants" works of such a nature are of comparatively little utility. Taylor is obliged to seek for the very illustrations of his principles, amongst the abuses of the Romish church,—abuses which have alone rendered the subtleties of casuistry necessary. His reasonings are, consequently, useful principally to persons in danger of falling into Romish errors, or who have been only partially reclaimed from them. It is needless to say that this class of persons was much larger in the days of Jeremy Taylor than in our own.—These observations apply more particularly to the second and some parts of the third books.

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A FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE OBSEQUIES OF THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD JEREMY, LORD BISHOP OF DOWN: WHO DECEASED AT LISBURN, AUGUST 13, 1667.

BY GEORGE RUST, D. D. LORD BISHOP OF DROMORE.

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1 JOHN III. 2.

It doth not yet appear what we shall be.

GLORIOUS things are spoken in Scripture concerning the future reward of the righteous; and all the words that are wont to signify what is of greatest price and value, or can represent the most enravishing objects of our desires, are made use of by the Holy Ghost, to recommend unto us this transcendent state of blessedness: such are these: "Rivers of pleasures; a fountain of living water; a treasure that can never be wasted, nor never taken from us; an inheritance in light; an incorruptible crown; a kingdom; the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Christ; the kingdom of glory; a crown of glory, and life, and righteousness, and immortality; the vision of God; being filled with all the fulness of God; an exceeding eternal weight of glory," καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, words strangely emphatical, that cannot be put into English; and if they could, they would not be able to convey to our minds the notion that they design; for it is too big for any expressions: and, after all that can be said, we must resolve with our apostle, "It does not yet appear what we shall be."

At this distance, we cannot make any likely guesses or conjectures at the glory of that future state. Men make very imperfect descriptions of countries or cities, that never were there themselves, nor saw the places with their own eyes. It is not for any mortal creature to make a map of that Canaan that lies above; it is, to all us that live here on the hither side of death, an unknown country, and an undiscovered land. It may be, some heavenly pilgrim, that, with his holy thoughts and ardent desires, is continually travelling thitherward, arrives sometimes near the borders of the promised land, and the suburbs of the New Jerusalem, and gets upon the top of Pisgah, and there he has an imperfect prospect of a brave country, that lies a far way off; but he cannot tell how to describe it; and all that he hath to say to satisfy the curious inquirer, is only this, "If he would know the glories of it, he must go and see it." It was believed of old, that those places that lie under the line were burned up by the continual heat of the sun, and were not habitable, either by man or beast: but later discoveries tell us, that there are the most pleasant countries that the earth can show; insomuch that some have placed Paradise itself in that climate. Sure I am, of all the regions of the intellectual world, and the several lands that are peopled either with men or angels, the most pleasant countries they lie under the line, under the direct beams of the Sun of righteousness, where there is an eternal day, and an eternal spring; where is that tree of life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month. Thus we may use figures, and metaphors, and allegories, and tell you of fruitful meads, and spacious fields, and winding rivers, and purling brooks, and chanting birds, and shady groves, and pleasant gardens, and lovely bowers, and noble seats, and stately palaces, and goodly people, and excellent laws, and sweet societies; but this is but to frame little comparisons to please our childish fancies; and just such discourses as a blind man would make concerning colours,—so do we talk of those things we never saw, and disparage the state while we should recommend it. Indeed, it requires some saint or angel from heaven to discourse upon the subject; and yet that would not do neither: for though they might be able to speak something of it, yet we would want ears to hear it. Neither can those things be declared but in the language of heaven, which would be little understood by us, the poor inhabitants of this lower world; they are, indeed, things too great to be brought within the compass of words. St. Paul, when he had been rapt up into the third heaven, saw ῥήματα ἄῤῥητα, "things unlawful, or impossible, to be uttered;" and "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him;" and, "it does not yet appear what we shall be," said that beloved disciple, that lay in the bosom of our Saviour.

You will not now expect that I should give you a relation of that which cannot be uttered, nor so much as conceived; or declare unto you what our eagle-sighted evangelist tells us "does not yet appear." But that you may understand that that which sets this state of happiness so beyond the reach of all imagination, is only its transcendent excellency, I shall tell you something of what does already appear of it, and may be known concerning it.

1. First of all, we are assured that we shall then be freed from all the evils and miseries that we now labour under; vanity and misery,—they are two words that speak the whole of this present world; the enjoyments of it are dreams, and fancies, and shadows, and appearances; and if any thing be, it is only evil and misery that is real and substantial. Vanity and folly, labour and pains, cares and

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fears, crosses and disappointments, sickness and diseases, they make up the whole of our portion here. This life, it is begun in a cry, and it ends in a groan; and he that lives most happily, his life is chequered with black and white, and his days are not all sunshine, but some are cloudy and gloomy, and there is a worm at the root of all his joy, that soon eats out the sap and heart of it; and the gourd in whose shade he now so much pleases himself, by to-morrow will be withered and gone. But heaven is not subject to these mixtures and uncertainties; it is a region of calmness and serenity, and the soul is there gotten above the clouds, and is not annoyed with those storms and tempests, that are here below. All tears shall then be wiped from our eyes; and though sorrow may endure for the night of this world, yet joy will spring up in the morning of eternity.

2. We are sure we shall be freed from this earthly, and clothed with a heavenly and glorified body. These bodies of ours, they are the graves and sepulchres, the prisons and dungeons of our heaven-born souls; and though we deck and adorn them, and pride ourselves in their beauty and comeliness, yet, when all is done, they are but sinks of corruption and defilement, they expose us to many pains and diseases, and incline us to many lusts and passions; and the more we pamper them, the greater burden they are unto our minds; they impose upon our reasons, and, by their steams and vapours, cast a mist before our understandings; they clog our affections, and, like a heavy weight, depress us unto this earth, and keep us from soaring aloft among the winged inhabitants of the upper regions: but those robes of light and glory, which we shall be clothed withal at the resurrection of the just, and those heavenly bodies which the gospel hath then assured unto us, they are not subject to any of these mischiefs and inconveniences, but are fit and accommodate instruments for the soul in its highest exaltations. And this is an argument that the gospel does dwell much upon, viz. the redemption of our bodies, that, "He shall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body;" and we are taught to look upon it as one great piece of our reward, that we shall be "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven;" that "this corruptible shall put on incorruption,—and this mortal, immortality;" that, "as we have borne the image of the earthly, so we must bear the image of the heavenly Adam; "who was ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπουράνιος, of "heaven heavenly;" as "the first man was ἐκ γῆς χοϊκὸς, of the earth earthy." And, therefore, I think, the schools put too mean a rate upon this great promise of the gospel—the resurrection of our bodies; and, I believe it might be demonstrated from the principles of sound philosophy, that this article of our christian faith, which the atheist makes so much sport withal, is so far from being chargeable with any absurdity, that it is founded upon the highest reason: for, seeing we find by too great an experience, that the soul hath so close and necessary a dependence upon this gross and earthly mass that we now carry about with us, it may be disputed with some probability, whether it ever be able to act independently of all matter whatsoever: at least, we are assured that the state of conjunction is most connatural to her, and that intellectual pleasure itself is not only multiplied, but the better felt, by its redundancy upon the body and spirits; and if it be so, then the purer and more defecate the body is, the better will the soul be appointed for the exercise of its noblest operations; and it will be no mean piece of our reward hereafter, that that which is sown σῶμα ψυχικὸν, an animal, shall be raised a heavenly body.

3. We are sure, that we shall then be free from sin, and all those foolish lusts and passions that we are now enslaved unto. The life of a christian, it is a continual warfare; and he endures many sore conflicts, and makes many sad complaints, and often bemoans himself after such a manner as this; "Woe is me, that I am forced to dwell in Meshech, and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar; that there should be so many Goliahs within me, that defy the host of Israel; so many sons of Anak, that hinder my entrance into the land of promise, and the rest of God; that I should toil and labour among the bricks, and live in bondage unto these worse than Egyptian task-masters." Thus does he sit down by the rivers of Babylon, and weep over those ruins and desolations, that these worse than Assyrian armies have made in the city and house of his God. And many a time does he cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Wretched creature that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" And though, through his faith, and courage, and constancy, he be daily getting ground of his spiritual enemies, yet it is but by inches; and every step he takes, he must fight for it; and living, as he does, in an enemy's country, he is forced always to be upon his guard; and if he slumber never so little, presently he is surprised by a watchful adversary. This is our portion here, and our lot is this: but when we arrive unto those regions of bliss and glory that are above, we shall then stand safely upon the shore, and see all our enemies, Pharaoh and all his host, drowned and destroyed in the Red sea, and, being delivered from the world, and the flesh, and the devil, death, and sin, and hell,—we shall sing the song of Moses, and of the Lamb, an epinicion, and song of eternal triumph, unto the God of our salvation.

4. We shall be sure to meet with the best company that earth or heaven affords. Good company, it is the great pleasure of the life of man; and we shall then come "to the innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly of the church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." The oracle tells Amelius, inquiring what was become of Plotinus's soul, that "he was gone to Pythagoras, and Socrates, and Plato, and as many as had borne a part in the choir of heavenly love." And I may say to every good man, that he shall go to the company of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses, David, and Samuel; all the prophets and

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apostles, and all the holy men of God, that have been in all the ages of the world. All those brave and excellent persons that have been scattered at the greatest distance of time and place, and, in their several generations, have been the salt of the earth, to preserve mankind from utter degeneracy and corruption,—these shall be all gathered together, and meet in one constellation in that firmament of glory. "O præclarum diem, cùm ad illud divinorum animorum concilium cœtumque proficiscar, atque ex hac turbâ ac colluvione discedam!" "O that blessed day, when we shall make our escape from this medley and confused riot, and shall arrive to that great council and general rendezvous of divine and godlike spirits!" But, which is more than all, we shall then meet our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of our recovery, whose story is now so delightful unto us, as reporting nothing of him, but the greatest sweetness and innocence, and meekness and patience, and mercy and tenderness, and benignity and goodness, and whatever can render any person lovely or amiable: and who, out of his dear love and deep compassion unto mankind, gave up himself unto the death for us men, and for our salvation. And if St. Austin made it one of his wishes, "to have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh," how much more desirable is it to see him out of his terrestrial weeds, in his robes of glory, with all his redeemed ones about him! And this I cannot but look upon as a great advantage and privilege of that future state; for I am not apt to swallow down that conceit of the schools, that we shall spend eternity in gazing upon the naked Deity; for certainly the happiness of man consists in having all his faculties, in their due subordinations, gratified with their proper objects; and I cannot but believe a great part of heaven to be the blest society that is there; their enravishing beauty, that is to say, their inward life and perfection, flowering forth and raying itself through their glorified bodies; the rare discourses wherewith they entertain one another; the pure, and chaste, and spotless, and yet most ardent, love, wherewith they embrace each other; the ecstatic devotions wherein they join together. And, certainly, every pious and devout soul will readily acknowledge with me, that it must needs be matter of unspeakable pleasure, to be taken into the choir of angels and seraphims, and the glorious company of the apostles, and the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs; and to join with them in singing praises, and hallelujahs, and songs of joy and triumph, unto our great Creator and Redeemer, the Father of spirits, and the Lover of souls, unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

5. We are sure we shall then have our capacities filled, and all our desires answered; "They hunger no more, neither thirst any more: for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." What vast degrees of perfection and happiness the nature of man is capable of, we may best understand, by viewing it in the person of Christ, taken into the nearest union with Divinity, and made God's Vicegerent in the world, and the Head and Governor of the whole creation. In this our narrow and contracted state, we are apt to think too meanly of ourselves, and do not understand the dignity of our own natures, what we were made for, and what we are capable of: but as Plotinus somewhere observes, "We are like children, from our birth brought up in ignorance of, and at a great distance from, our parents and relations; and have forgot the nobleness of our extraction, and rank ourselves and our fortunes among the lot of beggars, and mean and ordinary persons; though we are the offspring of a great Prince, and were born to a kingdom." It does, indeed, become creatures to think modestly of themselves; yet, if we consider it aright, it will be found very hard to set any bounds or limits to our own happiness, and say, "Hitherto it shall arise, and no further." For that wherein the happiness of man consists, *viz.* truth and goodness, the communication of the Divine nature, and the illapses of Divine love,—it does not cloy, or glut, or satiate; but every participation of them does widen and enlarge our souls, and fits us for further and further receptions: the more we have, the more we are capable of; the more we are filled, the more room is made in our spirits; and thus it is still and still, even till we arrive unto such degrees as we can assign no measures unto.

We shall then be made like unto God, Ἡ σωτηρία οὐχ' ἑτέρως γίνεται, εἰ μὴ θεουμένων τῶν σωζομένων, said the Areopagite; "Salvation can no otherwise be accomplished, but by becoming God-like." "It does not yet appear what we shall be;" but "when he shall appear, we shall be like him," says our evangelist; for "we shall see him as he is." There is no seeing God as he is, but by becoming like unto him; nor is there any enjoying of him, but by being transformed into his image and similitude. Men usually have very strange notions concerning God, and the enjoyment of him; or rather, these are words to which there is no correspondent conception in their minds: but if we would understand God aright, we must look upon him as infinite wisdom, righteousness, love, goodness, and whatever speaks any thing of beauty and perfection; and if we pretend to worship him, it must be by loving and adoring his transcendent excellencies: and if we hope to enjoy him, it must be by conformity unto him, and participation of his nature. The frame and constitution of things is such, that it is impossible that man should arrive to happiness any other way. And, if the sovereignty of God should dispense with our obedience, the nature of the thing would not permit us to be happy without it: if we live only the animal life, we may indeed be happy, as beasts are happy; but the happiness that belongs to a rational and intellectual being, can never be attained but in a way of holiness and conformity unto the Divine will: for such a temper and disposition of mind is necessary unto happiness, not by virtue of any arbitrarious constitution of heaven, but the eternal laws of righteousness, and immutable respects of things, do require and exact it: yea, I may truly say, that God and Christ, without us, cannot make us happy: for we are not conscious to ourselves of any thing, but only the operations of

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our own minds; and it is not the person of God and Christ, but their life and nature, wherein consists our formal happiness: for, what is the happiness of God himself, but only that pleasure and satisfaction that results from a sense of his infinite perfections? And how is it possible for a creature to be more happy, than by partaking of that, in its measure and proportion, which is the happiness of God himself?

The soul being thus prepared, shall live in the presence of God, and lie under the influences and illapses of Divine love and goodness: "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." They that fight manfully under the banners of Heaven, and overcome their spiritual enemies, "they shall eat of the hidden manna, and become pillars in the temple of God, and shall go no more out: they shall stand before the throne of God continually, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell amongst them." God shall put under them his everlasting arms, and carry them in his bosom, and they shall suck the full breasts of eternal goodness: for now there is nothing can hinder the most near and intimate conjunction of the soul with God; for things that are alike, do easily mingle with one another: but the mixture that is betwixt bodies, be they never so homogeneal, comes but to an external touch; for their parts can never run up into one another. But there is no such ἀντιτυπία, or "resistance," amongst spiritual beings; and we are estranged from God, οὐ τόπῳ ἀλλ' ἑτερότητι καὶ διαφορᾷ, "not by distance of place, but by difference and diversity of nature," and when that is removed, he becomes present to us, and we to him: ὥστε ἐφαρμόσαι καὶ οἷον ἐφάψασθαι καὶ θίγειν αὐτὸν ὁμοιότητι, &c. like the "magnitudines congruæ" in the mathematics, "Quando prima primis, media mediis, extrema extremis, partes denique partibus usquequaque respondent:" "Each of whose parts do exactly one to the other." This, therefore, is the soul's progress from that state of purgation to illumination, and so to union. There are several faculties in the soul of man, that are conformed to several kinds of objects; and, according to that life a man is awaked into, so these faculties do exert themselves: and though, whilst we live barely an animal life, we converse with little more than this outward world, and the objects of our senses,—yet there are faculties within us that are receptive of God; and when we arrive once unto a due measure of purity of spirit, the rays of heavenly light will as certainly shine into our minds, as the beams of the sun, when it arises above the horizon, do illuminate the clear and pellucid air: and from this sight and illumination, the soul proceeds to an intimate union with God, and to a taste and touch of him. This is that ἡσυχος πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἐπαφή, that "silent touch" with God, that fills the soul with unexpressible joy and triumph. For, if the objects of this outward world, that strike upon our senses, do so hugely please and delight us; what infinite pleasure then must there needs be in those touches and impresses, that the Divine love and goodness shall make upon our souls! But these are things that we may talk of, as we would do of a sixth sense, or something we have no distinct notion or idea of; but the perfect understanding of them belongs only to the future state of comprehension.

Lastly, we shall have our knowledge, and our love, which are the most perfect and beatifying acts of our minds, employed about their noblest objects in their most exalted measures; for a man to resolve himself in some knotty question, or answer some stubborn argument, or find out some noble conclusion, or solve some hard problem, what ineffable pleasure does it create many times to a contemplative mind! We know who sacrificed a hecatomb for one mathematical demonstration; and another, that, upon the like occasion, cried out, εὕρηκα, εὕρηκα, in a kind of rapture. To have the secrets of nature disclosed, and the mysteries of art revealed; but above all, the riddles of providence unfolded,—are such jewels as I know many searching and inquisitive spirits would be willing to purchase at any rate. When we come to heaven,—I will not say we shall see all things in the mirror of divinity, for that, it may be, is an extravagancy of the schools; nor that any one true proposition, through the concatenation of truth, will then multiply itself into the explicit knowledge of all conclusions whatsoever, for I believe that a fancy too;—but our knowledge shall be strangely enlarged, and, for aught I can determine, be for ever receiving new additions and fresh accruments; the clue of Divine providence will then be unravelled, and all those difficulties which now perplex us, will be easily assoiled; and we shall then perceive that the wisdom and goodness of God is a vast and comprehensive thing, and moves in a far larger sphere than we are aware of in this state of narrowness and imperfection. But there is something greater and beyond all this; and St. John has a strange expression, that "we shall then see God even as he is;" and God, we know, is the well-spring of perfection and happiness, the fountain and original of all beauty; he is infinitely glorious, and lovely, and excellent; and if we see him as he is, all his glory must descend into us and become ours: for we can no otherwise see God, as I said before, but by becoming deiform, by being changed into the same glory. But love, that is it which makes us most happy, and by that we are most intimately conjoined unto God, for "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him:" and how pleasant beyond all imagination must it needs be, to have the soul melted into a flame of love, and that fire fed and nourished by the enjoyment of its beloved; to be transported into ecstasies and raptures of love, to be swallowed up in the embraces of eternal sweetness; to be lost in the source and fountain of happiness and bliss, like a spark in the fire, or a beam in the sun, or a drop in the ocean!

It may be, you will tell me, I have been all this while confuting my text, and giving you a relation of that which St. John tells us, "does not yet appear what it is;" but my design has been the same with the holy evangelist's; and that is, to represent unto you how transcendently great that state of

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happiness must needs be: when as, by what way we are able to apprehend of it, it is infinitely the object of our desires; and yet we are assured by those, that are best able to tell, that the best and greatest part of the country is yet undiscovered, and that we cannot so much as guess at the pleasure of it, till we come to enjoy it. And, indeed, it is impossible it should be otherwise; for, happiness being a matter of sense, all the words in the world cannot convey the notion of it into our minds: and it is only to be understood by them that feel it; *μὴ κατὰ ἐπιστήμην ἡ σύνεσις ἐκείνου, μηδὲ κατὰ νόησιν, ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλλα νοητὰ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ παρουσίαν ἐπιστήμης κρείττονα.*

But though it does not yet appear what we shall be; yet so much already appears of it, that it cannot but seem the most worthy object of our endeavours and desires; and by some few clusters that have been shown us of this good land, we may guess what pleasant and delightful fruit it bears: and if we have but any reverence of ourselves, and will but consider the dignity of our natures, and the vastness of that happiness we are capable of; methinks we should be always travelling towards that heavenly country, though our way lies through a wilderness: and be striving for this great prize and immortal crown: and be clearing our eyes, and purging our sight, that we may come to this vision of God; shaking off all fond passions and dirty desires, and breathing forth our souls in such aspirations as these:

My soul thirsteth for thee, O Lord, in a dry and barren land, where no water is; O that thou wouldst distil, and drop down the dew of thy heavenly grace into all its secret chinks and pores. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and behold his glory: for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand, and I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. All the kings of the earth, they are thy tributaries; the kings of Tarshish, and of the isles, bring presents unto thee; the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. O that we could but pay thee that, which is so due unto thee, the tribute of our hearts! The heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled: help us, O God of our salvation, and deliver us, and purge away our sins from us, for thy name's sake! O that the Lord, whom we seek, would come to his own house, and give peace there, and fill it with his glory! Come and cleanse thine own temple, for we have made it a den of thieves, which should have been a house of prayer! O that we might never give sleep to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, till we have prepared a house for the Lord, and a tabernacle for the God of Jacob! The curse of Cain it is fallen upon us, and we are as vagabonds in the earth, and wander from one creature to another. O that our souls might come at last to dwell in God, our fixed and eternal habitation! We, like silly doves, fly up and down the earth, but can find no rest for the sole of our feet; O that, after all our weariness and our wanderings, we might return into the ark; and that God would put forth his hand, and take us, and pull us in unto himself! We have too long lived upon vanity and emptiness, the wind and the whirlwind; O that we may now begin to feed upon substance, and delight ourselves in marrow and fatness! O that God would strike our rocky hearts, that there might spring up a fountain in the wilderness, and pools in the desert; that we might drink of that water, whereof whosoever drinks, shall never thirst more; that God would give us that portion of goods that falleth to us, not to waste it with riotous living, but therewith to feed our languishing souls; lest they be weary and faint by the way! We ask not the children's bread, but the crumbs that fall from thy table: that our baskets may be filled with thy fragments: for they will be better than wine, and sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb, and more pleasant to us than a feast of fat things. We have wandered too long in a barren and howling desert, where wild beasts, and doleful creatures, owls and bats, satyrs and dragons, keep their haunts: O that we might be fed in green pastures, and led by the still waters, that the winter might be past, and the rain over and gone, that the flowers may appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds may come, and the voice of the turtle may be heard in our land! We have lived too long in Sodom, which is the place that God at last will destroy: O that we might arise, and be gone; and, while we are lingering, that the angels of God would lay hold upon our hands, and be merciful unto us, and bring us forth, and set us without the city; and that we may never look back any more, but may escape unto the mountain, and dwell safe in the Rock of ages! Wisdom hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, and furnished her table; O that we might eat of her meat, and drink of her wine which she hath mingled! God knocks at the doors of our hearts; O let us open unto him those everlasting gates, that he may sup with us, and we with him; for he will bring his cheer along with him, and will feast us with manna and angels' food; O that the Sun of righteousness might arise, and melt the iciness of our hearts! That God would send forth his Spirit, and, with his warmth and heat, dissolve our frozen souls! That God would breathe into our minds those still and gentle gales of Divine inspirations, that may blow up and increase in us the flames of heavenly love! That we may be a whole burnt-offering, and all the substance of our souls be consumed by fire from heaven, and ascend up in clouds of incense! That, as so many sparks, we might be always mounting upward, till we return again into our proper elements! That, like so many particular rivulets, we may be continually making toward the sea, and never rest till we lose ourselves in that ocean of goodness, from whence we first came! That we may open our mouths wide, that God may satisfy them! That we may so perfectly discharge ourselves of all strange desires and passions, that our souls may be nothing else but a deep emptiness and vast capacity to be filled with all the fulness of God! Let but these be the breathings of our spirits, and this Divine magnetism will most certainly draw down God

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into our souls, and we shall have some prelibations of that happiness; some small glimpses, and little discoveries whereof, is all that belongs to this state of mortality.

I have as yet done but the half of my text: and I have another text yet to preach upon, and a very large and copious one,—the great person, whose obsequies we here come to celebrate: his fame is so great throughout the world, that he stands in no need of an encomium; and yet his worth is much greater than his fame; it is impossible not to speak great things of him, and yet it is impossible to speak what he deserves; and the meanness of an oration will but sully the brightness of his excellencies: but custom requires that something should be said, and it is a duty and a debt that we owe only unto his memory: and I hope his great soul, if it hath any knowledge of what is done here below, will not be offended at the smallness of our offering.

He was born at Cambridge, and brought up in the free-school there, and was ripe for the university afore custom would allow of his admittance; but by that time he was thirteen years old, he was entered into Caius college; and as soon as he was graduate, he was chosen fellow. Had he lived among the ancient pagans, he had been ushered into the world with a miracle, and swans must have danced and sung at his birth; and he must have been a great hero, and no less than the son of Apollo, the god of wisdom and eloquence.

He was a man long afore he was of age, and knew little more of the state of childhood, than its innocency and pleasantness. From the university, by that time he was Master of Arts, he removed to London, and became public lecturer in the church of St. Paul's, where he preached to the admiration and astonishment of his auditory, and by his florid and youthful beauty, and sweet and pleasant air, and sublime and raised discourses, he made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory. The fame of this new star, that outshone all the rest of the firmament, quickly came to the notice of the great archbishop of Canterbury, who would needs have him preach before him, which he performed not less to his wonder than satisfaction; his discourse was beyond exception and beyond imitation: yet the wise prelate thought him too young; but the great youth humbly begged his grace to pardon that fault, and promised, if he lived, he would mend it. However, the grand patron of learning and ingenuity thought it for the advantage of the world, that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement, than a course of constant preaching would allow of; and to that purpose he placed him in his own college of All Souls, in Oxford; where love and admiration still waited upon him: which, so long as there is any spark of ingenuity in the breasts of men, must needs be the inseparable attendants of so extraordinary a worth and sweetness. He had not been long here, afore my Lord of Canterbury bestowed upon him the rectory of Uppingham in Rutlandshire, and soon after preferred him to be chaplain to King Charles the martyr, of blessed and immortal memory. Thus were preferments heaped upon him, but still less than his deserts; and that not through the fault of his great masters, but because the amplest honours and rewards were poor and inconsiderable compared with the greatness of his worth and merit.

This great man had no sooner launched into the world, but a fearful tempest arose, and a barbarous and unnatural war disturbed a long and uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, and brought all things into disorder and confusion: but his religion taught him to be loyal, and engaged him on his prince's side, whose cause and quarrel he always owned and maintained, with a great courage and constancy: till at last, he and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane, that overturned both church and state: this fatal storm cast him ashore in a private corner of the world, and a tender providence shrouded him under her wings, and the prophet was fed in the wilderness; and his great worthiness procured him friends, that supplied him with bread and necessaries. In this solitude he began to write those excellent discourses, which are enough of themselves to furnish a library, and will be famous to all succeeding generations, for their greatness of wit, and profoundness of judgment, and richness of fancy, and clearness of expression, and copiousness of invention, and general usefulness to all the purposes of a christian. And by these he soon got a great reputation among all persons of judgment and indifferency, and his name will grow greater still, as the world grows better and wiser.

When he had spent some years in this retirement, it pleased God to visit his family with sickness, and to take to himself the dear pledges of his favour, three sons of great hopes and expectations, within the space of two or three months: and though he had learned a quiet submission unto the Divine will, yet the affliction touched him so sensibly, that it made him desirous to leave the country; and going to London, he there met my Lord Conway, a person of great honour and generosity, who making him a kind proffer, the good man embraced it, and that brought him over into Ireland, and settled him at Portmore, a place made for study and contemplation, which he, therefore, dearly loved; and here he wrote his "Cases of Conscience:" a book that is able alone to give its author immortality.

By this time the wheel of Providence brought about the king's happy restoration, and there began a new world, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and out of a confused chaos brought forth beauty and order, and all the three nations were inspired with a new life, and became drunk with an excess of joy: among the rest, this loyal subject went over to congratulate the prince and people's happiness, and bear a part in the universal triumph.

It was not long ere his sacred majesty began the settlement of the church, and the great Doctor Jeremy Taylor was resolved upon for the bishopric of Down and Connor; and not long after, Dromore

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was added to it: and it was but reasonable that the kingdom and church should consider their champion, and reward the pains and sufferings he underwent in the defence of their cause and honour. With what care and faithfulness he discharged his office, we are all his witnesses; what good rules and directions he gave his clergy, and how he taught us the practice of them by his own example. Upon his coming over bishop, he was made a privy counsellor; and the university of Dublin gave him their testimony, by recommending him for their vice-chancellor: which honourable office he kept to his dying day.

During this being in his see, he wrote several excellent discourses, particularly his "Dissuasive from Popery," which was received by a general approbation; and a "Vindication" of it (now in the press) from some impertinent cavillers, that pretend to answer books, when there is nothing towards it more than the very title-page. This great prelate improved his talent with a mighty industry, and managed his stewardship rarely well; and his Master, when he called for his accounts, found him busy and at his work, and employed upon an excellent subject, "A Discourse upon the Beatitudes;" which if finished, would have been of great use to the world, and solved most of the cases of conscience that occur to a christian, in all the varieties of states and conditions. But the all-wise God hath ordained it otherwise, and hath called home his good servant, to give him a portion in that blessedness, that Jesus Christ hath promised to all his faithful disciples and followers.

Thus having given you a brief account of his life, I know you will now expect a character of his person; but I foresee it will befall him, as it does all glorious subjects, that are but disparaged by a commendation; one thing I am secure of, that I shall not be thought to speak by hyperboles; for the subject can hardly be reached by any expressions; for he was none of God's ordinary works, but his endowments were so many and so great, as really made him a miracle.

Nature had befriended him much in his constitution; for he was a person of a most sweet and obliging humour, of great candour and ingenuity; and there was so much of salt and fineness of wit, and prettiness of address, in his familiar discourses, as made his conversation have all the pleasantness of a comedy, and all the usefulness of a sermon. His soul was made up of harmony; and he never spake, but he charmed his hearer, not only with the clearness of his reason, but all his words, and his very tone and cadences, were strangely musical.

But that which did most of all captivate and enravish, was the gaiety and richness of fancy; for he had much in him of that natural enthusiasm, that inspires all great poets and orators; and there was a generous ferment in his blood and spirits, that set his fancy bravely a-work, and made it swell, and teem, and become pregnant to such degrees of luxuriancy, as nothing but the greatness of his wit and judgment could have kept it within due bounds and measures.

And, indeed, it was a rare mixture and a single instance, hardly to be found in an age: for the great trier of wits has told us, that there is a peculiar and several complexion required for wit, and judgment, and fancy; and yet you might have found all these in this great personage, in their eminency and perfection. But that which made his wit and judgment so considerable, was the largeness and freedom of his spirit; for truth is plain and easy to a mind disentangled from superstition and prejudice; he was one of the Ἐκλεκτικοὶ, a sort of brave philosophers that Laertius speaks of, that did not addict themselves to any particular sect, but ingeniously sought for truth among all the wrangling schools; and they found her miserably torn and rent to pieces, and parcelled into rags, by the several contending parties, and so disfigured and misshapen, that it was hard to know her; but they made a shift to gather up her scattered limbs, which as soon as they came together, by a strange sympathy and connaturalness, presently united into a lovely and beautiful body. This was the spirit of this great man; he weighed men's reasons, and not their names,—and was not scared with the ugly visors men usually put upon persons they hate, and opinions they dislike; not affrighted with the anathemas and execrations of an infallible chair, which he looked upon only as bugbears to terrify weak and childish minds. He considered that it is not likely any one party should wholly engross truth to themselves; that obedience is the only way to true knowledge; which is an argument that he has managed rarely well, in that excellent sermon of his which he calls, "Via Intelligentiæ;" that God always, and only, teaches docible and ingenuous minds, that are willing to hear and ready to obey, according to their light; that it is impossible a pure, humble, resigned, God-like soul, should be kept out of heaven, whatever mistakes it might be subject to in this state of mortality; that the design of heaven is not to fill men's heads, and feed their curiosities, but to better their hearts, and mend their lives. Such considerations as these made him impartial in his disquisitions, and give a due allowance to the reasons of his adversary, and contend for truth, and not for victory.

And now you will easily believe that an ordinary diligence would be able to make great improvements upon such a stock of parts and endowments; but to these advantages of nature, and excellency of his spirit, he added an indefatigable industry, and God gave a plentiful benediction: for, there were very few kinds of learning, but he was a Mystes, and a great master in them: he was a rare humanist, and hugely versed in all the polite parts of learning; and had thoroughly concocted all the ancient moralists, Greek and Roman, poets and orators; and was not unacquainted with the refined wits of the later ages, whether French or Italian.

But he had not only the accomplishments of a gentleman, but so universal were his parts, that they were proportioned to every thing; and though his spirit and humour were made up of smoothness and gentleness, yet he could bear with the harshness and roughness of the schools; and was not unseen in

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their subtilities and spinosities, and, upon occasion, could make them serve his purpose; and yet, I believe, he thought many of them very near akin to the famous Knight de la Mancha, and would make sport sometimes with the romantic sophistry, and fantastic adventures of school-errantry. His skill was great, both in the civil and canon law, and casuistical divinity; and he was a rare conductor of souls, and knew how to counsel and advise; to solve difficulties, and determine cases, and quiet consciences. And he was no novice in Mr. I. S.'s new science of controversy; but could manage an argument and repartees, with a strange dexterity; he understood what the several parties in christendom have to say for themselves, and could plead their cause to better advantage than any advocate of their tribe; and when he had done, he could confute them too; and show, that better arguments than ever they could produce for themselves, would afford no sufficient ground for their fond opinions.

It would be too great a task to pursue his accomplishments through the various kinds of literature: I shall content myself to add only his great acquaintance with the fathers and ecclesiastical writers, and the doctors of the first and purest ages both of the Greek and Latin church; which he has made use of against the Romanists, to vindicate the church of England from the challenge of innovation, and prove her to be truly ancient, catholic, and apostolical.

But religion and virtue is the crown of all other accomplishments; and it was the glory of this great man to be thought a christian, and whatever you added to it, he looked upon as a term of diminution: and yet he was a zealous son of the church of England; but that was because he judged her (and with great reason) a church the most purely christian of any in the world. In his younger years he met with some assaults from popery: and the high pretensions of their religious orders were very accommodate to his devotional temper: but he was always so much master of himself, that he would never be governed by any thing but reason, and the evidence of truth, which engaged him in the study of those controversies; and to how good purpose, the world is by this time a sufficient witness: but the longer and the more he considered, the worse he liked the Roman cause, and became at last to censure them with some severity; but I confess I have so great an opinion of his judgment, and the charitableness of his spirit, that I am afraid he did not think worse of them than they deserve.

But religion is not a matter of theory and orthodox notions; and it is not enough to believe aright, but we must practise accordingly; and to master our passions, and to make a right use of that *αὐτεξούσιον*, and "power that God has given us over our own actions," is a greater glory than all other accomplishments that can adorn the mind of man; and, therefore, I shall close my character of this great personage with a touch upon some of those virtues, for which his memory will be precious to all posterity. He was a person of great humility; and notwithstanding his stupendous parts, and learning, and eminency of place, he had nothing in him of pride and humour, but was courteous and affable, and of easy access, and would lend a ready ear to the complaints, yea, to the impertinencies of the meanest persons. His humility was coupled with an extraordinary piety, and, I believe, he spent the greatest part of his time in heaven; his solemn hours of prayer took up a considerable portion of his life; and we are not to doubt but he had learned of St. Paul to pray continually; and that occasional ejaculations, and frequent aspirations and emigrations of his soul after God, made up the best part of his devotions. But he was not only a good man God-ward, but he was come to the top of St. Peter's gradation, and to all his other virtues added a large and diffusive charity; and whoever compares his plentiful incomes with the inconsiderable estate he left at his death, will be easily convinced that charity was steward for a great proportion of his revenue. But the hungry that he fed, and the naked that he clothed, and the distressed that he supplied, and the fatherless that he provided for; the poor children that he put to apprentice, and brought up at school, and maintained at the university, will now sound a trumpet to that charity which he dispersed with his right hand, but would not suffer his left hand to have any knowledge of it.

To sum up all in a few words: This great prelate had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a school-man, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a counsellor, the sagacity of a prophet, the reason of an angel, and the piety of a saint: he had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for an university, and wit enough for a college of virtuosi: and, had his parts and endowments been parcelled out among his poor clergy that he left behind him, it would, perhaps, have made one of the best dioceses in the world. But, alas! "Our father! our father! the horses of our Israel, and the chariot thereof!" he is gone, and has carried his mantle and his spirit along with him up to heaven; and the sons of the prophets have lost all their beauty and lustre, which they enjoyed only from the reflection of his excellencies, which were bright and radiant enough to cast a glory upon a whole order of men. But the sun of this our world, after many attempts to break through the crust of an earthly body, is at last swallowed up in the great vortex of eternity, and there all his maculæ are scattered and dissolved, and he is fixed in an orb of glory, and shines among his brethren-stars, that, in their several ages, gave light to the world, and turned many souls unto righteousness; and we that are left behind, though we can never reach his perfections, must study to imitate his virtues, that we may at last come to sit at his feet in the mansions of glory; which God grant for his infinite mercies in Jesus Christ! to whom, with the Father, through the Eternal Spirit, be ascribed all honour and glory, worship and thanksgiving, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

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CHRISTIAN CONSOLATIONS;

TAUGHT FROM

FIVE HEADS IN RELIGION:

I. FAITH; II. HOPE; III. THE HOLY SPIRIT; IV. PRAYER; V. THE SACRAMENTS.

[The following piece, as appears by the preface prefixed to the original edition by the publisher, was first written for the private use of a "noble and excellent lady." Before the late edition of Jeremy Taylor's whole works was published, this little treatise had become exceedingly scarce, not more than one copy being known to exist. There is no doubt about its being a work of Jeremy Taylor. Every page bears the marks of the author's peculiar style and manner.]

TO THE READER.

THIS manual of Christian Consolations, derived from Five Heads of great importance in Religion, was written by a late Reverend Prelate of our church, and now is printed according to his own copy.

The papers were presented by him to a person of honour, for whose private use they were designed; but, as the noblest spirits are most communicative, that noble and religious lady was pleased to impart them for the good also of others. We read in the Evangelists, how that the holy Jesus, who "went about doing good," (that is the short, but full, character which Saint Peter[a] gives of him,) did, by a miracle of mercy, bless five loaves to the feeding of a very great multitude. And may the same Almighty goodness bless and prosper whatsoever spiritual good is contained in these FIVE HELPS and DIRECTIONS FOR A CHRISTIAN'S COMFORT, to the refreshing and strengthening of such souls as truly hunger and thirst after God! May the serious and devout readers taste and see how good the Lord is, that his loving-kindness is better than life,—and that the light of his countenance, the sense of his favour, is infinitely more heart-cheering, and brings with it a truer and larger satisfaction, than the increase of "corn, and wine, and oil,"[b] doth to the men of this world, who only or chiefly "mind earthly things," and unwisely place their felicity in the fading and empty enjoyments of this present life.

It is a good thing, then, that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord; for, "he is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him."[c]

He who is the God of love, and even Love itself;[d] he who is the ever-flowing fountain of goodness, will not fail to fill the hungry with good things. Such a christian hath meat to eat which the world knows not of; he feeds on the hidden manna: he hath (as St. Austin said of St. Ambrose) "occultum os in corde ejus," and with this he doth "sapida gaudia de pane Dei ruminare." "The Father of the world, who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, giving to all their meat in due season;"[e] "he is as ready to fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."[f] And here, from the character and qualification of the persons, (them that fear him, and them that walk uprightly,) it highly concerns us to observe, and to lay it to heart, that a sincere desire and serious endeavour to fear God and walk uprightly, is a necessary and indispensable condition to qualify and make us meet for the receiving of the best of Divine favours and blessings. We must first walk in the fear of the Lord, if we would walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; as these two are set together.[g] If we would have the Spirit to be our comforter, we must follow the Spirit as our guide and counsellor. If we would find rest unto souls, we must take Christ's yoke upon us,[h] the yoke of his precepts, which are all holy, and just, and good. A state of inward comfort and true tranquillity of spirit can never be secured and preserved, but by a continued care to walk before God in faithful obedience to his will in all things.

For "there is no peace to the wicked,"[i] as is twice expressed by the noble prophet Isaiah;[k] but "great peace have they that love thy law,"[l] saith the royal psalmist, the man after God's own heart,

[a] Acts x. 38. [b] Psalm iv. [c] Lam. iii. [d] 1 John iv. [e] Psalm cxlv. [f] Psalm lxxxiv. [g] Acts ix. 31.
[h] Matt. xi. [i] Chap. xlviii. 22. [k] Chap. lvii. 21. [l] Psalm cxix. 165.

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who herein spake his own experience; and elsewhere, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."[m] While he lives, he lives in peace, his soul dwells at ease; he feels an unspeakable joy and pleasure within, upon the sense of his doing his duty, and being faithful in obedience to his Lord and Master in heaven. And when he dies, he departs in peace,[n] and shall "enter into peace," and "into the joy of his Lord."[o] Here he "tastes how sweet the Lord is," but there "he shall be abundantly satisfied with the plenty of God's house, and made to drink of the river of his pleasures."[p] "The meek shall eat and be satisfied, and their heart shall live for ever."[q] And so full and complete shall be their joy and satisfaction, that "they shall neither hunger nor thirst any more; for the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."[r] This is the happy portion of those souls who have the Lord for their God, with whom "there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures," most pure and permanent, "for evermore."

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE work of the ministry consists in two things, in threatenings or comforts. The first is useful for the greatest part of christians, who are led by the spirit of bondage, and fear to do evil, because of wrath to come; which grows out of love to themselves. The second is fit for the best christians, that are led by the spirit of love; who endeavour to do righteousness, because they love righteousness, and to be like unto God, who, they know, is only good, (which grows out of the spirit of adoption,) and obey as sons and daughters, and not as servants.

Our Saviour and his apostles insist sometimes upon the former way, threatening the impenitent, yet qualifying it with tidings of peace, if they return and amend their lives. For sharpness must be applied, according to the power which the Lord has given us, for edification, and not for destruction.[a] The same apostle propounds both in the former epistle,[b] "Shall I come unto you with a rod? or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" Which latter is most suitable to the gospel, to proclaim peace on earth, and good will towards men: and when James and John would have had fire to come down from heaven upon the Samaritans, Christ reproved them, saying, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them:"[c] and St. Paul, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."[d] And surely there is cause to apply a cluster of consolation against a few grains of terror: 1. Because we are all concluded under sin, and the guilt is ever present unto us. 2. Because of the weakness of the graces that are in us; not that they are weak, but that human corruption is mixed with them. 3. Because of the strength and manifoldness of temptations. 4. Because we are to be exercised with the sufferance of the cross, and we are infirm to bear it. Lastly, because little is communicated to us, at the present, of that reward we look for; least of all, is any share of it present and before our eyes. Forasmuch then, as there are so many in-draughts that break into our heart, to make us sick of sorrow and fear, let us seek comfort from God, who hath left no disease without a remedy to cure it, "who healeth all thy diseases."[e] I say, it is to be sought from God, lest we light upon them that tell false dreams, and comfort in vain.[f] The right place for it must be the word of God, as it is:[g] "that we, through patience, and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope." Which comfort, scattered up and down in that holy book, and not cast all in a lump together, by searching it diligently, we may draw our consolation out of five things,—faith,—hope,—the in-dwelling of the Spirit,—prayer,—and the sacraments.

CHAPTER I.

That Faith is the Ground and Foundation of a Christian's Comfort: several Doubts and Scruples about believing, answered.

FAITH is the root of all blessings. Believe, and you shall be saved: believe, and you must needs be sanctified: believe, and you cannot choose but be comforted: believe that God is true in all his

[m] Psalm xxxvii. 37. [n] Isaiah lvii. [o] Matt. xxv. [p] Psalm xxxvi. [q] Psalm xxii. [r] Rev. vii.
[a] 2 Cor. xiii. 10. [b] Ibid. iv. 21. [c] Luke ix. 56. [d] 1 Thess. v. 9. [e] Psalm ciii. 3.
[f] Zech. x. 2. [g] Rom. xv. 4.

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promises, and you are the seed of faithful Abraham, and shall inherit the promises made to Abraham: believe that you are Christ's, and Christ is yours; and then you are sure that none can perish, whom the Father hath given to him. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."[a] And as Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died:"[b] so let all that groan and pine away in sorrow, say, Lord, if thou hadst been here, if thou hadst appeared to my soul in thy goodness, I had not fainted in my trouble. Isaiah foretells,[c] that it should be Christ's office "to give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. For St. John saw in the spirit, that they that follow Christ, are clothed in "white garments," in garments of joy, in the livery of gladness. Solomon, describing the provident mistress of a family,[d] says, "She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet." So the household of Christ are not afraid of frost and snow, nor of any bitter blast; they have put on the garment of dependence on Christ, which protects them, and do resolve never to put off their privy coat of confidence in their Saviour. With this did Christ encourage the poor woman, being under confusion, who had secretly touched the hem of his garment; "Be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."[e] The first time that the word comfort is found in Scripture, is[f] upon the birth of Noah; his father says, "This son shall comfort us:" so when God did give Christ to be made man, he did, as it were, say unto us, "This Son shall comfort you, for his name is Jesus, and he shall save his people from their sins." He that gave us him, hath given us all things with him. As it is true to say, that Matthew left all to follow Christ, so is it as true, that he got all that can be wished by following him.

It is the chemistry of faith (let me use that word) to turn all things into good and precious ore. It is Abraham's country in a strange land: Jacob's wages, when Laban defrauded him: Moses's honour, when he refused to be the son-in-law of Pharaoh's daughter: Rahab's security, when all Jericho besides did perish: David's rescue, when there was but a step between him and death: the power of the apostles, to be able to cast out devils: Mary Magdalen's sweet ointment, to take away the ill-savour of her sins. Plead, therefore, with the oratory of faith, and say, "Lord, I have no life but in thee, I have no joy but in thee, no salvation but in thee: but I have all these in thee; and how can my soul refuse to be comforted?"

But some will say, perhaps, "Faith is a powerful comforter: but I, poor wretch, had need to be comforted concerning my faith. I find the pulse of it weak, and sometimes it intermits, as if it beat not at all. Methinks I am not drawn near to Christ, or that I am so far off, that I cannot embrace him." Some such infirmity may seem to have been in the Thessalonians; and therefore St. Paul says, "I have sent Timotheus to establish you, and to comfort you, concerning your faith."[g]

Now, to turn this water into wine, and the trembling of this objection into peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, conceive as if these questions were put to you; "Do you often accuse yourself of a weak faith in secret unto God?" I like it for a good symptom; for an hypocrite doth not use to accuse himself.—"And do you bewail your want to the Lord, because you would have it better supplied?" that is a good sign too, for it is the same as to thirst for the living God. They that have not the gift of faith, do not miss it: but they that have it, though but in a little, do insatiably desire the increase of it.

But do you find that the more you put forward to come to Christ, the more you are put back by doubts and temptations? It is right the resemblance of him that was sick of the palsy;[h] fain he would have been brought to Christ, but could not come at him for the press. This press that stops you, are the snares of the world, vain imaginations, nay, perhaps humility, a broken heart, and a tender conscience: yet find out a way to come to your Saviour, though the throng be cumbersome. If there be no other way, untile the house, break down the roof to be brought unto him: call unto the Lord to dissolve this house of clay, that thy soul may see him clearly without all impediment. But, at the worst of all, do you lie in a swoon, as it were? do you think there is no life, no motion in your faith? do you fear the light of grace is so eclipsed, that you have lost all communion with Christ? Remember, and be assured, that you could not miss Christ so much, unless Christ were in you. Because God loves you, he seems to leave you; and withdraws out of the way for a time, because he would be found; and makes you desire to seek him, that you may hold him the surer, to you, when you enjoy him. A mother that hath conceived, may think, not long after, that she perceives some tokens of her conception; in a while, she doubts of it again, and wisheth some signs of better satisfaction: she hangs long under many assays of fear and persuasion: at last she finds the babe spring in her womb, and is utterly confirmed. So it is with them in whom Christ is born anew; they have found the Lord,—yet sometime, as it is in the Canticles, "He is behind the lattice," that we miss him by a spiritual jealousy, and fall into many of these fits, as if he were quite departed. And in this state of trepidation we must be exercised, that we may know, that holy fear and a troubled spirit are heavenly qualities, that may consist with faith.

Yet I have more to ask. Do you look dejectedly upon your faith, because you apprehend it is not full of life in the root, nor laden with fruit in godly practice? Woe be to them that are not sensible of those infirmities. It is one of the best lessons in the New Testament, "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;"[i] but it is one of the hardest. God gives a measure of faith to all in the covenant

[a] Romans viii. 1. [b] John xi. 21. [c] Isaiah lxi. 3. [d] Prov. xxxi. 21. [e] Matthew ix. 22.
[f] Gen. v. 29. [g] 1 Thess. iii. 2. [h] Mark ii. 4. [i] 2 Tim. ii. 1.

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that call upon him; but we have this gift in earthen vessels, and taint it with the affections of our carnal mind. The best faith is weak and wavering, short-sighted, riseth and falls like a tune in music. Therefore, to encourage a perplexed mind, hearken to Isaiah,[k] "Say to them that are of a sorrowful heart, Be strong, fear not." For though it be but an infant faith, it is a true faith: as an infant is a true man in the essence of a man, though not a man in growth; perfect in the real being, though not in the degrees, wherein we must strive to grow up more and more. To prove the truth of it, believe all the word of God, and it can be no wider: and for the soundness of it, believe in Christ, and look for salvation in him alone; then it is as legitimate and true-born as is the faith of any saint that is far more noble. A dim or a blear eye, that looked upon the brazen serpent, did procure a remedy for a wound, as much as a clear and well-conditioned eye. And a little faith, casting its weak beams on Christ and his death, will go far. The quantity of a grain of mustard-seed hath warmth and virtue in it to spread abundantly. If faith on earth hath shaken off all frailty, and comprehended the joys of heaven, without casting its eye aside to the love of this world, I do not conceive how the body could subsist any longer here, but that the soul, in that ecstasy, would be dissolved, and fly away.

Lastly; as God sees such sins in you as you cannot see, so he sees such graces in you as you cannot perceive. The charitable, to whom Christ speaks when they are at his right hand,[l] do deny such good things to be in them, as Christ did profess they had. The Canaanitish woman found no better in herself than the vileness of a dog, that waited for crumbs under the table; but Christ commends her for her great faith. The centurion[m] saw nothing but unworthiness in his person; but Christ gave him the praise above all those to whom he had preached in Israel. Confess then, and be not ashamed to say, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" And take consolation, that water-springs shall flow out of a barren ground, which suspected itself to be parched and dry. Though you see but little by your own light, it is because it is put into the lantern of humility. And let these be the consolations of faith.

CHAPTER II.

That a Christian's Comfort flows from the Grace of Hope. The Object of Hope is, 1. *That which is good.* 2. *A Good absent.* 3. *Though absent, yet possible; and that for three Reasons.* 4. *Though possible, yet difficult. An account of two Sorts of Difficulties, with particular Encouragements against them.*

YET know that faith never rides single, but it carries hope before it. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for."[a] No scripture doth better contain them both in a little than Titus:[b] the apostle says, that "the faith of God's elect," first, "acknowledgeth the truth:" secondly, that "it is according to godliness:" thirdly, "it is in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." When you see a weight of iron tied to a line, wound upon a wheel from the ground to the top of a house,—remember it is like the heart of a sinner, leaden and heavy, lying upon the ground, and wound up in this text, with the line of hope, to the top of heaven. Heaven then is the express and fair object of hope, and God, in his promise, is the procurer. "Promise," I say: for we do not grope for heaven blindfold, and fall upon it out of our own head without a warrant: but our assurance is incomparably the best that can be given, and in the best manner; "a promise made before the world began;" that is, freely, unrequested, when we could have no being to ask it; and made over to Christ the Mediator, that it should be put into his hand to perform it to us. And it is unchangeable, as is all the truth of God: for "he cannot lie," neither is there any shadow of change in him. What can we desire more? Carry this evidence along with you, and show it to yourself upon every disquietness and deep plunge of heart; and how can you choose but convince yourself, that your melancholy and distrust is causeless? "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness."[c] And "we rejoice in hope."[d] The design of hope is considered four ways. First, it intends unto that which is good;—which makes a difference between hope and fear: for we hope for that which is good, we fear that which is evil. Secondly, it is not that good which is present, but absent; and this makes a difference between hope and fruition. "Hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"[e] Thirdly, though it be a good absent, and not yet obtained, yet it is possible;—which is the difference between hope and despair: but we have no colour for despair, since all things are possible to God. Fourthly, it is a possible good, but "bonum arduum," to be gotten with difficulty and pains; which puts a difference between the diligence of hope and careless security. These are the four promontories of hope, and a good wind blows from every quarter.

I. First, it is good for a man to hope, since we hope for that which is good, so good that it exceeds

[k] Chap. xxxv. 4. [l] Matt. xxv. 34. [m] Matt. viii. 10. [a] Heb. xi. 1. [b] Chap. i. 1, 2.
[c] Prov. x. 26. [d] Rom. xii. 12. [e] Rom. viii. 24.

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all that eye hath seen: for as yet we see not God but in his creatures. Nor ear hath heard it, that is, in its full, unutterable excellency, which the words of Holy Scripture cannot express to our imperfect reason. Then "neither can it enter into the heart of man:" for things can seem no greater than words can utter. "We know as yet but in part, hereafter we shall know as we are known." If we have boasted to the heathen, that we look for a kingdom and a crown of glory, we are sure we shall not be ashamed of that hope.[f] We may be ashamed that we have doted upon petty things out of which we have devised felicity, and they have failed and deceived us: but our treasure laid up in the heaven is so sure, that in the end, and in the day of trial, none shall insult over our hope and say, "Where is now the Lord your God?" If a mortal man detain the wages of the labourer, it is a sin: therefore, it cannot be incident to God, "who is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love."[g] "We shall not always be forgotten: our expectation shall not perish for ever."[h] The judgment of a good eye-sight is to see afar off; so, in the judgment of a good hope, to remark the unspeakable reward of a better age to come. Whereupon it hath sufficient satisfaction and content to leave or to lose all it hath, things "not worthy to be compared to the glory which is revealed in us."[i] The rich mines and golden trade of both the Indies are on the other side the line: so the rich trade of hope is in the other world. Change your poor freight, which is your lading in this vessel of clay, and barter it for an immortal possession.

Hope that is not under the embers, but mounts up into a trembling flame, reckons not what it is worth by a very little which it hath in hand, but by its share which is reserved in the storehouse of God's eternal recompence. Now I am abased; but there is mine honour, a far more abundant exceeding weight of glory. Now I carry about a crazy, sickly body; there it shall be immortal, and incident to no distemper. Now my neighbours and acquaintance despise me, and run far from me; there I shall be enrolled with angels and saints, and "with the church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect."[k] Now I live in all disorder of church ordinances, in distraction of schisms, in the filthy stench of old and new heresies: but there is the New Jerusalem, where all things set forth the glory of the Lamb, in beauty, and holiness, and truth. Now I must die, and deliver up my body unto the dust; but Christ died and rose again the third day, and will bring again with him, in due time, all those that sleep: and "comfort one another with these words," saith St. Paul.[l] And as when Christ ascended into heaven, "he went up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet;"[m] so let every heart break out into praise and gladness, whose hope flies up unto the Lord in his holy places: "holding fast the confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end."[n]

II. Stay yet, and consider it is a good which is absent that we hope for: when it is come, and brought to pass, hope is at the journey's end. "Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."[o] It shall be well; "dixit,—erit." It is not paid down, as we say, in ready money, but we have a good bond for assurance.

Let one object upon this, "Doth not hope deferred afflict the soul?" Yet be not disheartened: it is better than so. For first, we have somewhat in hand; because that which faith lays hold of, is really and actually its own: now hope is faith's rent-gatherer, and takes up that which faith claims upon the bargain which Christ hath made for us.

To be clearer yet: "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance."[p] You see, then, that though we have not the inheritance as yet, we have the earnest of it: and an earnest penny is more than nothing. Here I must distinguish between a pledge and an earnest. A pledge is laid down for assurance to repay that which was lent; but an earnest is given upon a bargain, to keep that till the rest be brought in. Now the earnest we receive of the kingdom to come is the seal of the Spirit, an imprinted comfort that it shall be ours, a seal that cannot be defaced, a comfort that cannot be taken from us. So much as you have of that seal, so much you have of the earnest: therefore, you cannot say that hope hath quite nothing to stay its longing. The blossoms of the spring do not only promise, but are God's earnest, to represent the fruits which will wax ripe in autumn.

I will make it out in another similitude. He that is in a merchant's warehouse, where spices are stored up, shall have some taste of them in his palate by their strong scent, though he put not one corn into his mouth: so we taste heaven, because the Spirit that comes from heaven, dwells in us, and gives many delightful signs of a glorified reversion.

But to go forward: it may not be denied but that hope is anxious and restless, till it come to enjoy. How tedious a thing it is to stay long without the company of them whom we entirely love! and can it be otherwise than irksome, to be so long absent from the vision of God, and of Christ, compassed with innumerable angels? St. Paul says no less:[q] "We that have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Here are groans and sighs indeed; but we shall never be sea-sick with that easy tossing, having "hope as an anchor of our souls."[r] Hope of the right stamp, looking for the appearance of God, and the reward that he brings with him, hath a good mate that goes together with it, and that is patience. In the saddest book of the Scripture,[s] it is written, "It is good that a man should hope, and quietly wait for

[f] Rom. v. 5. [g] Heb. vi. 10. [h] Psalm ix. 18. [i] Rom. viii. 18. [k] Heb. xii. 23.
[l] 1 Thess. iv. 14. [m] Psalm xlvii. 5. [n] Heb. iii. 6. [o] Isaiah iii. 10. [p] Eph. i. 13, 14.
[q] Rom. viii. 23. [r] Heb. vi. 19. [s] Lam. iii. 26.

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the salvation of the Lord." Which, that it may not be wanting, we must contend for it in prayer, as it is,[t] "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ." And it is no difficult thing to be persuaded. For when we are held off for a while from the inheritance of heaven, do we not attend God's leisure? And will the handmaid wait for her mistress, being in some degrees of place above her? And shall not the creature stay the leisure of the Creator, so infinite above us? Beside, the expectation of the recompence will increase the recompence, and make it more superlative; therefore, "let not him that believes, make haste."[u] Nay, so your spirit will be patient, the Lord will allow you your importunity to call upon him to hasten: "My strength, haste thee to help me."[x] Finally, stay for that contentedly, which, when it comes, it comes but once, and shall abide for ever.

III. Another degree upon which hope steps higher, is this, that her aim is possible. I have said how that which is proposed to it, is good; that it is not disconsolate, though it be in futurition, and not yet obtained (for it is too good to be yet obtained); if patience have its perfect work, it can attend cheerfully. "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him."[y] Strike we, therefore, pleasantly upon this third string, that the past object of Divine hope is to be accomplished. "For I run not as uncertainly, I fight not as one that beateth the air."[z] Paul did do all things, and suffer all things, for that which is feasible and might be achieved.

The covetous is a projector for so much wealth as can never be gotten. The epicure longs for so much pleasure as can never be enjoyed. Great clerks and philosophers seek for so much knowledge as can never be found; which, in Isaiah's words, is "to spend money for that which is not bread, and to labour for that which doth not satisfy."[a] This is able to break the brain and to break the heart; for there is no labour like to lost labour. "But the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life."[b] His hope stands upon a sound bottom; it is all comfort for three reasons: 1. It is possible, because it comes from an infinite power; 2. Because it is derived from infinite love and goodness; 3. It hath abundant satisfaction from long and constant experience; and what can we desire more?

1. The first pillar that props it up, is the almightiness of God. "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee," says our Saviour.[c] Talk not to me how the seas should be turned into dry land, or how the poor can be raised up to be set with the princes of the people; or how stones can be raised up to be children of Abraham; or how palsies and fevers can be cured with a word. I will stop all gaps of infidelity with this one bush, "That God is able to do it." He that is made by no cause, cannot be confined in his being; and he that hath no bounds in his being, can have no bounds and restriction in his power. And if any fancy start out of our weak brain, to cavil that somewhat is impossible to God, —it is soberly spoken by one, that "it were better to say that this could not be done, than that God could not do it." There is no possibility, therefore, for christian hope to despair, because all things are possible to God. There is no horizon under heaven, or above heaven, that hope cannot look beyond it. For that comfort that is commensurable with the strength and power of God, is as large as can be contained in the heart of a creature.

But if you lean upon the help of men, and hosts, and angels, they are slender reeds, and will give you a fall: as God said of the vain trust of the Jews, "They shall be ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation."[d] How many do I see to sink under a little sorrow, because they have too much temporal comfort! The world is too liberal to them; it hath given them of all things so largely, that they have not the patience to want any thing: as God told Gideon, that he had too much of man in his army to depend upon the Almighty for victory, and he bade him retain but the thirtieth part, and his foes should flee before him.[e] Throw all the miserable comforts of the world out of doors for rubbish, and cast yourself upon the strength of God, and upon that alone: and then say, "Lord, receive me, for I have driven all other solace from me, that I might enjoy thee alone: now I am ready for my Saviour, for there is none to help me but only thou, O Lord!"

2. That which holy hope hath in its prospect, is possible, not only for the infiniteness of power, but for the infiniteness of the mercy of our God. It is easy to get the favour of a gracious and a gentle nature among the sons and daughters of men; and the most generous are the most reconcilable. Then what possibility, nay, what readiness will hope find to be reconciled to God, "merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth?"[f] The devil is not more frequent nor more strong in any temptation, than to undermine hope in this point, that it is too forward and too peremptory to expect remission of sins: fain he would have a tender conscience stick in this mire, and never get out of it. Some reverend writers go so far as to teach that Satan himself at first, when he began his mischief in Paradise, was of opinion, that sin could not be forgiven, it being his own case; and he would never have tempted Eve to disobedience, if he had imagined the eating of the forbidden fruit could be pardoned; not suspecting that God would have given his only Son to die for our redemption. Which I pass by, because it depends upon a grave question, whether God could pardon sin by his absolute power, without satisfaction made to his justice? Deep disputings will yield but shallow comforts. Of this we are assured, that the means which the Father appointed, are excellent, into which "the angels desire to look,"[g]—to give us "redemption and forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, accord-

[t] 2 Thess. iii. 5. [u] Isaiah xxviii. 16. [x] Psalm xxii. 19. [y] Psalm lxii. 5. [z] 1 Cor. ix. 26. [a] Chap. lv. 2.
[b] Prov. xi. 30. [c] Mark xiv. 16. [d] Isaiah xx. 5. [e] Judges vii. 4. [f] Exod. xxxiv. 6. [g] 1 Pet. i. 12.

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ing to the riches of his grace."[h] "We have trespassed against our God, but there is hope concerning this thing."[i] "Forgiveness of sins" is put into our creed: he that doth not believe it, hath no creed nor christianity in him. Do you believe a "catholic church?" that is the dowry of that church, which Christ espoused to him in his blood. Do you believe "a communion of saints?" this is it in which we are baptized, in which all our communion doth join, "That through Christ is preached forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses."[k] So also it is put into our prayer, as well as into our creed. And he that taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins,"—hath taught us this comfort, that sins are pardonable.

Yet an afflicted conscience will receive suggestion, that some sins indeed are pardonable, but not all, not the sin of the evil angels, not the sin against the Holy Ghost: "and there is a sin unto death, I do not say ye should pray for it," says St. John.[l] These, verily, are set out for instances of irreversible judgment, to deter us from committing crimes of a vast magnitude. But mark, the Holy Scriptures have not unfolded it clearly and explicitly, wherein the heinousness of these sins did consist, that we may not accuse ourselves of them, and fall into despair, as if we had committed them. Since you know not expressly what these are, how can you lay them to your own charge? Nay, if you lay them to your own charge, you must be mistaken; for he that condemns himself, shall not be condemned of the Lord. Such incurable castaways as have their consciences seared, are not sensible of their guilt. Who more like to be of that number than the Pharisees, who justified themselves, saying, "Are we also blind?"

"Well," says a forlorn sinner, "my sins then are not the forenamed, nor out of possibility of mercy; but it is almost as bad that they are in an unlikelihood to mercy, for they are very heinous." As unto that confession that your trespasses are very heinous, conceive so of them, and spare not: true repentance thinks no sin to be a little one. So St. Jerome spake to the commendation of the lady Paula, in her funeral sermon, that she was wont to bewail every fault she had committed as if it were one of the most presumptuous crimes. But be it so really, that God hath let you incur no small delinquencies: as Aaron was not free from idolatry,—nor David, from adultery,—nor Peter, from abjuration of Christ,—nor Paul, from persecuting the church,—nor Manasses, from witchcraft,—nor Mary Magdalen, from indefinite scandal; well, I know not what; who yet all obtained mercy, for a pattern to them, who hereafter should believe in Christ to everlasting life.[m] They were called Novatians, who blotted out the beginning of the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel, because the story tells us, that Christ dismissed the woman taken in adultery, with a gracious gentleness. Why should not his procedure in judgment be like his doctrine? Did he not preach that publicans and harlots should go into heaven before proud justiciaries? "Be merciful unto my sin, for it is great," says David.[n] This is not the way to deal with mortal judges, when we stand at their bar; but this is the way to obtain propitiation from our God; "heal me, for I am sore wounded; cure me, for I am very sick; be merciful to my sin, for it is very great." Zozimus, a pagan, that envied the honour of Constantine the Great, makes this tale to discredit him in his history; that Constantine had put his wife, Fausta, and his son, Crispus, to death; after which, being haunted with an ill conscience, that gave him no quiet, he sought among the heathen priests for expiation, and they could give him no peace: but he was told that the religion of christians was so audacious as to promise pardon to all sins, were they never so horrible. Is not this to commend the emperor and his religion under the form of a dispraise? for what rest could a troubled mind attain to from the rites and superstitions of idol gods? But, in the immense value of the price of the blood of Christ, there is redemption for every sinner that repents and believes. "Whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," says Christ to his apostles.[o] Oh, loose not a syllable of such comfort in this discomfortable world! "Quodcunque" is "all manner of sin," great and little. And if Christ hath given such commission to men on earth, to unloose every sin by the power of their office, and the word of consolation,—then how unbounded is his own clemency! No sins can superabound his grace, if we do not sin presumptuously, because grace abounds.

Yet the poor publican will beat his breast, and cry out dolefully, "My sins are many; they are more in number than the hairs of my head." The bill of indictment is a true bill; who can tell how oft he offendeth? Scarce any sin we act, but hath a nest of sins in it: then think we what a heap will they make when they are put all together? Peter, it seems, misdoubted, that if a man were forgiven, that had trespassed often, it would be scandalous, and encourage the offender; therefore, he thought it fit to stint indulgence to some mediocrity, as it is,[p] "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?—until seven times? Jesus answereth, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven times." So that Christ commends a boundless forgiveness in a finite number for an infinite. And, doubtless, himself would not stick with us for the same number. God forbid we should think he taught to be more merciful, or of greater perfection, than himself. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven."[q]

Be thankful, and admire the mercies of our Father, both for nailing our great sins to the cross of Christ, and for acquitting us from the innumerable fry of minim sins, those of daily incursion: because when one of the least is remitted, all are remitted together. Mark that considerately. One that com-

[h] Eph. i. 7. [i] Ezra x. 2. [k] Acts xiii. 38, 39. [l] 1 Epist. v. 16. [m] 1 Tim. i. 18. [n] Psalm xxv. 11. [o] Matt. xviii. 18. [p] Matt. xviii. 21. [q] Luke vii. 47.

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mitted some foul and leprous sin, goes mourning upon the deep sense of it, and especially the horror of it makes him fear damnation: yet he greatly deceives himself if he think his other sins are passed over,—and this great one, or a few such, do remain to his perdition. For do you hope comfortably that some faults of omission, some idle words, some garish and customary fashion of pride, are remitted to you? With the same affiance, leaning on Christ, you may hope that you are discharged from your greatest enormities. For all unrighteousness is covered at once to them, with whom God is well pleased. No sin is forgiven to him that is not in Christ,—and against him that is in Christ, there is no condemnation. They are the sons of God, to whom the Lord doth graciously remit any fault; but where any fault is not remitted, they are his enemies. He that is justified from any sin, must be truly penitent; but a true penitent is sorry for all sins together, hates them, eschews them all alike. Then follows a plenary absolution from all iniquity, through Christ our Lord.

And beware that you overlook not these multitudes of sins of the under size, as if little grief or anxiety would serve for them. Are they not numberless corns of sand? And may not a weight of too much sand sink a ship as soon as a burden of too much iron. The dailiness of sin must be bewailed with the dailiness of sorrow. And then "when thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet."[r] Now, tell me, if this balm be not enough to heal the bleedings and bruisings of despair? Talents of sins in small money, you may hide them all in the wounds of Christ. It is possible for God to do the benefit, and possible for thee to receive it. "Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."[s]

3. It must now be added, how that which hope waits for, is possible, since it may find satisfaction from long and constant experience. In the younger days of the world, somewhat might be said to excuse the backwardness of hope: they wanted proof and demonstration in those times. Even Cain was the sooner overtaken with despair, crying out, "My sin is greater than can be forgiven me." He had not lived so long to be taught the contrary by experience. But every age hath given advantage to hope to be satisfied better and better. "O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them."[t] The records of God do tell us how the armies of aliens have been discomfited before his children; how the rocks have given them drink, and the barren wilderness bread; how the church hath been scattered and re-collected; the righteous continually supported, either with deliverance or patience; that the dead have been raised up to life; nay, that Enoch and Elias were taken up alive into heaven, to implant into our minds, that both they that are in the graves, shall hear the voice of Christ, and come forth; and that such as shall be found living at that day, shall be caught up in the clouds, and be translated into heaven. And I challenge hope to instance, if it can surmise, that any thing is impossible to be brought to pass, since there is a precedent in every thing to demonstrate, that the right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass. There is one thing, I confess, for which there is no example, neither can be evidenced, till all things be accomplished, that is, the coming of the Lord Christ with the new heavens and the new earth; and yet, to confirm us in that mystery to come, St. John did see the idea or glimpse of it in his Revelation.

The use of all this is to remember the transactions of God in the times that are gone before. Whoever saw the righteous forsaken? or the wicked flourish long? Was there ever any persecution of the church which hath not ended in its triumph? But stay for it, and pray for it, and condole for the delays of God's providence, till you may say in earnest, "My soul fainteth for thy salvation."[u] How easy is it for a christian that hath any nostril, to run after God in the odour of his sweet ointments, and trace his steps from point to point! and then to say with David, "I have remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself."[x] And from another prophet,[y] "Ye shall see their way, and their doings, and ye shall be comforted concerning all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem."

The great storehouse of consolation is hope: therefore, all this, and more, must be said to keep it fresh, like a green olive tree, having never a sear or withered bough upon it. I come now to complete it; I have shown it aims only at good, and that which is only and excellently good: at such a good whose harvest is not brought in all in a year, but still there is more and more to be had, and the most to come. It is possible, through the greatness of God's power and mercy, as all ages have witnessed.

4. But lastly; that which may seem to pinch is, that it is "bonum arduum," "a good not easily attained," but with great labour and diligence, to give warning against sloth and security. It were not worth our longing, to say we hope for petty things, easy, and at hand; but for things of value, for which we must struggle with many lets and impediments to possess them. No man need to hope to find cockle shells on the shore; but to find pearls in the sea, that is an object for the adventure of a jeweller. Neither is the jewel of christian hope easily purchased. But as Elijah said to Elisha, "Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me, when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee."[z] Much after that sort I commune with my heart, and say, "It is good to seek for eternal life, pursue it, as the hart brayeth after the rivers of waters: there will be much ado to get it, for "many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."[a] Nevertheless, if thou canst see the Lord,

[r] Prov. iii. 24. [s] Psalm cxxx. last verse. [t] Psalm xliv. 1. [u] Psalm cxix. 31.
[x] Psalm cxix. 52. [y] Ezek. xiv. 22. [z] 2 Kings ii. 10. [a] Luke xiii. 14.

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as if he were continually before thee, thou shalt not miss of that thou desirest: for all things are possible to him, whose eyes are ever toward the Lord."

These difficulties upon which I strike, are either in ourselves, or in our adventure: in ourselves, partly through natural imbecility, partly through contracted impotency.

1. Our natural languor is that of original contagion, which makes us so weak, that there is none that doth good, no, not one: which is not to be extenuated, as if the malignity of it might be suppressed with a little resistance. It is good to know the power of so strong an enemy, that we may be fortified against it. It is a root of bitterness never to be digged up out of corrupt nature: a coal of fire spitting out sparks of temptations continually: as inward to us as the marrow is in our bones. Yet there is hope in Christ to slake this fire, though not utterly in this life to quench it. It is a body of death, a whole body, consisting of all the members of sin; yet a body is but flesh, and a spirit is mightier than flesh. Apply that of the prophet Zechariah to it, as we may read it by the direction of our margin, and keep to the original:[b] "If it be difficult in the eyes of this people, shall it be difficult in mine eyes? saith the Lord." Therefore, since God is our help against the insurrection of this rebellious sin, let us be comforted in his help, and not in excuses. For we must not plead our personal maladies and natural inclinations, and think that God will take it for an answer, and ask no more.

"I am dull of understanding," says one, "and what I am taught I cannot bear it away. I am suddenly transported with indignation, and cannot choose but break out: I am retentive of an injury, and cannot easily be reconciled." All this, and the like, is no better than the answer of those ill-mannered guests in the gospel, which are invited to a feast made by a king,—"We cannot come, I pray you have us excused:" which sounds like confession and humility, but it is denial and defiance. Spend your breath in a better way, and cry out often and affectionately,—"Give me not over to myself, O Lord; take away from me my stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh. Drop down upon this barren earth, and it shall bring forth quite against the bias of nature. The high-minded will grow meek as a lamb, the covetous will begin to disperse and scatter abroad, the lying lips will confess the truth, bitter cruelty will melt into pity, new-fangled braveries will be laid aside, and blush at vanity." To what purposes are the pourings in of the Spirit, but that what is wickedly inbred from our conception, should be shaken off from the tree, and a better fruit spring up in the place, from the increase of God?

Mark the rain that falls from above, and the same shower that dropped out of one cloud, increaseth sundry plants in a garden, and severally according to the condition of every plant: in one stalk it makes a rose, in another a violet, divers in a third, and sweet in all. So the Spirit works its multiformous effects in several complexions, and all according to the increase of God. Is thy habit and inclination choleric? Why, try thyself if thou be very apt to be zealous in a good cause, and it turns thy natural infirmity into holy heat.—Is melancholy predominant? the grace of God will turn that sad humour into devotion, prayer, and mortifying thy pleasures to die unto the world.—Is thy temperature sanguine and cheerful? the goodness of God will allow it unto thee in thy civil life, in a good mean; but over and above, it will make thee bountiful, easy to pardon injuries, glad of reconciliation, comfortable to the distressed, always rejoicing in the Lord.—Is a man phlegmatic and fearful? if this freezing disease, which is in thee from thy mother's womb, be not absolutely cured, yet the Holy Ghost will work upon it, to make thy conscience tender, wary to give no offence, to make thee pitiful, penitent, contrite, ready to weep for thy transgressions. "There are two handles to take hold of every thing," says a heathen: a dissolute man takes hold of original frailties, and makes them serpents: a holy man declines their serpentine nature, and catcheth them by that part which may conduce to all manner of virtue. This is the comfort of hope against original inquination, that this great enemy, by the operation of the Spirit, shall be made our friend, or our footstool. "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."[c]

What is stronger than a lion? yet, if the lion be killed, "out of the strong comes forth sweetness."[d] For all this, the worst is not past: beside natural pronity to sin, we have contracted much more evil by custom, education, strong habits, noxious examples, bad enticements, and infusions. The cockatrice' egg was laid, when we were in our mother's womb, but it proves more venomous being hatched, and grown able to fly abroad. There are seventy sons of Ahab, who shall kill thee? Even the sword of the Spirit: "there is none like it," as David said of that of Goliah.[e] This is sufficient, not merely to cut down grass and briars, but to hew down the trees, to cut off the branches, to shake the leaves, to scatter the fruit, to frighten away the fowls from the branches, and the beasts from grazing under it;[f] or, as the apostle comforts us in plain words, without a parable, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."[g] If you be overtoiled and heated too much, you know how to cool: cast off some garments, wipe away the sweat, sit still and stir not, lest you inflame yourself with motion. Follow the same method; lay aside the burden of sin, that inflames you, cast off the weight and the superfluity of naughtiness: bear in mind that Christ sweat drops of blood in his agony, to make you ashamed of toiling and sweating in Satan's drudgery. Take ease in a sabbath of holy rest, and moil not in the unprofitable works of darkness. Try what refrigeration this will give unto your conscience: else take heed that you be not put to a terrible sweat of fear, lest God take you away in his wrath, and give you up for ever unto Satan, whom you have served so willingly.

[b] Chap. viii. 6. [c] Rom. vii. 24. [d] Judges xiv. 14. [e] 1 Sam. xxi. 9. [f] Dan. iv. 14. [g] Phil. iv. 13.

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"To the law and to the testimony:" mind no examples, but when they are wrapt up therein. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."[h] What a case had Noah been in, if he had framed his life by common practice, when all flesh had corrupted their way? Choose better company, as Enoch did, to walk with God.[i] And "can two walk together unless they be agreed?"[k] It is more than agreement: it imports endearment, benevolence, friendship with God. No title can be greater or sweeter: what can match that honour of Abraham and the apostles, to be called the "friends of God and Christ?" No league in the world more sought for or more willingly accepted: no amity less burdensome or more beneficial. St. Austin[l] brings in a couple that served the Roman emperor, thus debating upon it: "What can we look for in this palace, more than to be called the friends of our sovereign? When we have got this, it is no sure and unchangeable favour. And how long shall we attend before we be promoted to it? But let us then turn to God in this hour, and sue to be his friends, and it shall be done instantly, and remain eternally."—"Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and we shall find." And as we trespass by sins of daily prevention, there is a dailiness of mercy to comfort us. But as you love Christ and would be beloved, struggle with temptations, do not yield upon the first enticement, no, nor upon the second or third assault. "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you:" quit yourself like a man, fight like a christian: "the flesh is weak, but the Spirit is willing, ready, able to assist you."[m] Thus hope waxeth valiant, and assures itself of victory against customs, habits, and all contracted impotencies.

2. Lay now our adventure, the toil and peril of our labour, wherein we are employed, in another balance, and more difficulty will appear. For hope is wise, and doth not flatter itself, as if the kingdom of heaven were accessible with little pains. What carefulness ought this to work in us! what self-denial; what fear; what zeal; what unblamable conversation! "I run, I fight, I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."[n] "For Christ Jesus I have suffered the loss of all things."[o] Christ, having overcome the sharpness of death, hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers: yet to put us to our labour and skill to follow, mark what he has taught us,—"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."[p]

And, therefore, is it so strait and narrow? a question worthy to be resolved, to teach us and to comfort us.

First; a very religious life is said, by a metaphor, to go in at a strait gate, because it is our masterpiece to find the door, or to begin well; therefore, it is called "to be born again." For, as to be born into the world needs more art and skilful midwifery, than to bring us up; so to be regenerate, to begin to live the life that is in Christ, is exceeding irksome to flesh and blood: so many are the enticements that throng about the way, to keep us from the door, and to hold us in love with those sins, which have been our companions. As an orator will be more timorous to deliver the first period of his speech, than all that follows; so we stick long at the first onset to reform, to be strict, to pass away with so much vanity as must be forsaken. The penitent thief could not find the door, till he was going out of the world: St. Paul, as some compute, was twenty-eight years old before he left to be a blasphemer. But rush on, and make way through all resistances: he that hath one foot over the threshold, and hath cast the world behind him, is well advanced into the courts of our God.

Secondly; a heavenly mind gathers itself up into one wish, and no more. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require."[q] Grant me thyself, O Lord, and I will ask no more. The new creature asks nothing of God, but to enjoy God; give me this, O Lord, and for the rest, let Ziba take all. I will part with all to buy that one pearl, the riches of heavenly grace. The servant of sin hath all manner of pleasures under heaven to trade in. Can he ask for a shop with more variety of ware? why may he not have these, you will say, and life eternal to boot? Some of them are inconsistent with life eternal; but all are not, so they be added, and not sought for: as our Saviour distinguisheth, "First, seek the kingdom of God, and these things shall be added."[r] But if you seek them, which is to love them for themselves, and above the kingdom of God, it is like a man that carries a piece of timber at breadth upon his back; there is no room for a man to get in with such an impediment upon his shoulders. It is not the gate that excludes him, but he thrusts himself out with his own improvidence.

Thirdly; there are thousands of scandals, millions of errors, to be avoided, but truth and holiness are in the middle, in a little compass; and happy is he that shuns extremes, and falls perpendicularly upon the golden mean. The commandments of God are "but ten words;"[s] the inventions of men, and the forms of will-worship are innumerous. "Pray, fast, give alms;" Christ comprehends much external duty under those three heads, but the traditions of men are more than can be put in a catalogue. "Call upon God in the time of trouble;" that, and no more, is the pole-star of faith in prayer; but what a compass doth monkishness take in, to drop beads in the invocation of angels and saints! Profaneness neglects the honour of God: superstition falls into needless excesses about it: the true fear of God is in the centre, as far from the one extreme as from the other. As in an accurate song, you must keep minim time, or else you will put the whole choir out; so look that you sing the new song

[h] Rom. xii. 2. [i] Gen. v. 24. [k] Amos iii. 3. [l] Confess. 8. c. 6.
[m] Matt. xxvi. 41. [n] 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. [o] Phil. iii. 8. [p] Matthew vii. 14.
[q] Psalm xxvii. 4. [r] Matthew vi. 33. [s] Deuteronomy iv. 13.

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of the Lord with trembling and accurate observation, miss neither cliff nor note, that is, neither sound doctrine nor pious practice.

These are the reasons why it is so hard to get access to Christ in a narrow way, and through a strait gate. If these difficulties be not discerned by some, it is because they take up christianity as it is in use amongst men, and as they are born to it. But they that came to it in their years of understanding, and were trained up in church-discipline many years before they were baptized, and all that time were put to exact trial what they would prove, and were taught it over and over, how the laws of Christ were far stricter than any other laws in the world;—these were pre-acquainted with the covenant which they must perform, and then received it, with the largest and hardest conditions. Yet they were brought on with two special comforts: first, that God did behold from heaven the mightiness of the task, which we took upon us, the troubles of persecutions, the dangers of temptations, the infirmities of man to resist them. "He knows whereof we are made, he remembereth we are but dust;" it puts him to admire the performances of his saints, as Jesus marvelled at the centurion's faith.[t] Secondly, when we are under our hazards, we shall have an answer from the Lord, as St. Paul had, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."[u] Therefore, as the Lord said of David, when he had chosen him, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty;"[x] so we, casting ourselves upon the help of God, upon one that is almighty, though of ourselves we have gathered little into our omer, the blessing of God upon it will not let us lack. "Every hard matter that rose among the people, was to be brought to Moses."[y] So in every hard cause, desire the Lord to plead it, and to judge it; bring it to him, leave it in his court, and he will end it. These are the cordials to revive hope, touching the difficulties it finds in the way to obtain that good which is set before it.

CHAPTER III.

How a Christian's Comforts flow from the Inhabitation and Testimony of the Holy Ghost; as also from the Sanctification of the Spirit unto all Obedience, and the Fruits of Righteousness.

I HAVE insisted with so much length and variety upon hope, because it is the largest inlet of christian consolation. Yet, in the third place, that which carries it on, nay, that which causeth it, is the Holy Ghost. As the air is the medium through which the eye doth see all things, yet it is the light that shines in it that makes all things visible: so hope is the principal means, enlivened by faith, through which we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; yet it is the Spirit inhabiting, that kindles it, that enlightens it, which makes it affect its object, and cleave unto it. Our Saviour left the world, and ascended into heaven, for many reasons; one was "to give gifts unto men," which gifts, though very many, are all united in their fountain, the Holy Ghost. Of which legacy, Christ gave warning before his death.[a] "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."[b] "The world knows him not, because it sees him nót: but ye know him, for he shall dwell with you, and shall be in you."[c] "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."[d] "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." This Comforter, the everlasting Spirit, to speak after the phrase of men, is the proxy of Christ, his representative in our hearts. And so it was fulfilled: for when the Spirit descended in great abundance upon the church, St. Peter says, "This is that which is come to pass."[e] "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."[f] And for the evidence of it, it is said, "The churches were edified, walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."[g] Which text begins this note, that christian solace consists in two things, which we may call the root and the fruit. The root is the Holy Ghost taking up his tabernacle in us, so that "our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in us."[h] To walk by it in the fear of God is the fruit of sanctification in all manner of obedience.

1. Unto the former, the in-dwelling of the Spirit, let this be premised. When we speak of any one dwelling in safety, the great question is, who keeps the house? When David fled from Jerusalem for fear of Absalom, there was no likelihood that his palace would hold out, for "he left ten women, that were concubines, to keep the house."[i] So if we leave our concubines, our lusts and carnal desires, to keep our conscience, they will betray us to Satan to get the possession. "But who can take the city, if the Lord keep it?"[k] How impregnable are we, if he dwell in us, and we in him, "because he hath given us of his Spirit."[l]

All that one can say unto this, who is doubtful in faith, will be, "Show me that the Father of mercies, and that the God of all comfort, is entered into me, and it sufficeth." I answer, I cannot show, that is, demonstrate it to another, that this eternal life is in him; but I can persuade an apt scholar to stir up

[t] Matt. viii. 10. [u] 2 Cor. xii. 9. [x] Psalm lxxxix. 19. [y] Exod. xviii. 16. [a] John xiv. 16. [b] Verse 17. [c] Verse 18. [d] Chap. xvi. 7. [e] Acts ii. [f] Verse 28. [g] Acts ix. 31. [h] 1 Cor. vi. 19. [i] 2 Sam. xv. 16. [k] Psalm cxxvii. 1. [l] 1 John iv. 13.

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the grace which is in him, that he may show it to himself. I say, he may do it, if he give his mind to it. Else, St. Paul made a question to no purpose, "Know ye not that ye are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"[m]

I deny not but the devil hath a way to fetch it about, to make you misknow, and take no heed of that you do perceive, if he did not stagger you with delusions. This is the first lesson that he reads out of his morals, "That distrust is a high point of wisdom; and be not over-reached with opinion: you are sure of that you see, and of no more." But to meet with this fallacy: Is nothing certain, or at least so certain as that which may be seen? Why, the wind will blow away this objection, the air will confute it. What can you make up so close that the air and the wind will not get into it? Yet you see it not, you know not whence it comes, it is an invisible messenger: "So is every one that is born of the Spirit."[n] Breath is an imperceptible expiration; therefore, Christ breathed on his apostles, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."[o] Some gales of western winds, in the spring, make the earth glad with their gentle blast, and open the buds and flowers: so there is a breath of omnipotent virtue, which fans the heart that was hot in sin, with its coolness, which carries away the caterpillars that eat up the tender leaf of our first greenness: which widens our blossoms to make their expectation show itself openly: which perfume the evil scents of scandals that annoy us, as it is express to that intent in the mystical song. "Awake, thou north wind; and come, thou south; and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."[p]

I bring the case again to be examined: Is no witness so competent to depose for truth, unless it be sensible, and chiefly discerned by the eye? then what ail all sects of philosophers to say, "That the sun, and all the stars above, work upon these bodies below by heat and light, and likewise by influence?" An invisible virtue that doth enter into the production of many effects; which seems to have God's approbation with his own voice, who mentions there "the sweet influences of Pleiades, and the bands of Orion."[q] And can the constellations of the firmament drop down good upon minerals and plants, upon man and beast, and by a secret derivation? What an error, or rather what a madness, is it then, to scruple whether he that made the heavens, can dart celestial beams into man's soul, without a sensible perception! And this is all I will say more unto it; Is not the soul of man above a material apprehension? Pliny, or Galen, or whosoever unadvisedly deny the immortality of it, will yield there is a soul in our composition, that holds all the parts of the body together, and moves and acts in them; yet they can as soon take a pencil, and paint an echo, as describe the intelligible nature of a soul, by species drawn out in our sensitive fancy. Therefore, it concerns us, in maintenance of the dignity of our own nature, to say, that the Spirit of God can inform our soul, as well as our soul can inform our body. I know not what temptation may rise to gainsay the truth, that the soul is known by her powers and operations, that it justifies itself to be an immaterial substance, a spark kindled in us by God from reason, and will, and memory. But what evidence is there that there is a Divine cause that worketh in, and is more than, these natural faculties? It is requisite to work close unto this question: and I answer, first, because the bounds of nature are known, beyond which, nature cannot reach forth itself: as it works in its own sphere to preserve itself in being, and in well-being, in health, in wealth, in fame and glory, in extending ourselves unto ages to come by leaving a posterity, in preserving our country where we are born, and the like. But to have our conversation in heaven, at this present in heaven, to ascend thither in our desires, and in the tendencies of all our actions, to aspire to live in blessedness for ever, to long to be at that rest, where there is no sin; to look for a church which hath neither spot nor wrinkle: this could not enter into us to prosecute it all industriously, constantly, cheerfully, but by a supernatural elevation far above the vigour of a soul pressed down by a corruptible body, that is, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Secondly; I feel the pulse of that Divine Spirit beating in me, by "delighting in tribulations" for Christ's sake, and "taking pleasure in infirmities" upon the same score.[r] And again, "I am filled with consolation, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations."[s] An obstinate pagan might arm himself with patience and resolution, to vex his persecutors, and rather fall into them, than decline them, out of spite and contumacy. But self-love being spun out of our bowels, bred in the bone; who could rejoice to endure anguish upon anguish, that God might be glorified, but by strength which we are not born unto, but which is given us because we are born again of the Spirit?

Go farther yet. How much is the content of a natural man laid aside, when a good christian in his deliberate thoughts sometimes prays to have the rebellions of his heart kept under by some expedient cross? wisheth for wholesome correction to beat down the rankness of his sins? expects God's fan to winnow the chaff from the wheat? For he knows that as too much light dazzles the eyes, so too much prosperity surfeits the mind. Therefore, a good practitioner in repentance perceives there is no better way to bring him in from his wanderings, than to be scourged home with the gentle hand of God. To which, some expositors say, the spouse alludes, (reading one word as it is right in our margin,) "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have puffed me up."[t] If we be puffed up, it is time to pray that the eye of God's outward mercy be for a little turned from us. But where had nature learned that lesson, if the Holy Ghost had never taught it?

[m] 1 Cor. iii. 16. [n] John iii. 8. [o] John xx. 22. [p] Cant. iv. 16. [q] Job xxxviii. 31. [r] 2 Cor. xii. 10. [s] 2 Cor. vii. 4. [t] Cant. vi. 5.

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Thirdly; as the apostle says, "No man hates his own flesh." Every man, not overcome with a frenzy of melancholy, loves his own being, and would preserve his life. The devil, that cannot die, knows how loth we are to die: "All that a man hath, will he give for his life." [u] But how many saints have undergone, how many more are willing to undergo the fiery trial, and offer up their bodies for the testimony of the Lord Jesus! not to be cried up in popularity; not to be enrolled in the fame of a history, as there was such a sprinkling among the heathen. But they have died like lambs in the midst of wolves, when they have been hated, and evil spoken of in excess, because they would die for the truth of the gospel, which their prosecutors accounted to be blasphemy against the gods which they worshipped. If parents, or wives, or children, hung upon their arms, and besought them with tears to spare themselves, they threw them off as Christ did Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." [x] To see a martyr at the point of death feel no horror in his fleshly nature, but to be raised up as high as the third heavens with zeal; what human power could bring him to it? nothing but the Holy Ghost did, as I may say, lure his soul out of the body, with the bait of a crown of glory.

Fourthly; "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, temperance," [y] &c. Is not the tree known by the fruit? Such a cluster hanging all together, growing constantly, and being fair and sound, (Tota, in toto tempore, cum toto corde,) it is not possible they should grow like a bulrush out of the mud of corrupt nature. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," [z] that is, say it effectually, and from true allegiance to serve him as a Lord; for else Christ will say, "Why call you me Lord, Lord, and do not the thing which I say?" [a] This is the Spirit that acts not only in prophecies and miraculous gifts, but in every child of God. Even in the Old Testament, "Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them:" [b] "them," that is, those that were led out of Egypt by Moses, and hearkened to him. And much more in the state of the New Testament; "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." [c]

This might be extended into a great length, that the Holy Ghost is the Comforter, called so by appropriation, though it belong to every person of the Holy Trinity, and is well expressed in the first Divine Song, which is printed before the Psalms of David in metre:

"Thou art the very Comforter
In all woe and distress;
The heavenly gift of God most high,
Which no tongue can express."

This is "the unction, which we have from the Holy One;" [d] "the anointing which we have received of him that abideth in you;" [e] anointing oil is an oil to cure the sick: [f] "an oil of gladness:" [g] a fomentation to mitigate aches and torments in the bones, and in the heart.

2. And can the fruits choose but be answerable to the root? they must needs partake of it. First, because all that we do to the honour of God, must be done with gladness, willingly, and cheerfully: else it comes not from the spirit of sons, but either from the spirit of bondage, or rather from the spirit of the world. The new disciples received the word gladly, and were baptized. [h] They continued with one accord daily in the temple, "with gladness, and simplicity of heart." [i] "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord." [k] "Sing psalms, make a joyful noise unto God." [l] "Let us come with assurance in our supplications that we shall be heard praying with faith in the Holy Ghost." [m] "And then the prayer of the upright shall be God's delight;" [n] and why God's delight, but because his servants delight in prayer? "He that showeth mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness." [o] And he that giveth, offereth a blemished sacrifice, if he do it grudgingly: "For God loveth a cheerful giver." [p] Not so much but our losses and tribulations must be sustained with gladness. "Thy rod and thy staff do comfort me." [q] Enter into the combat willingly, and the continuance will be a pleasure. Our consolation aboundeth by Christ: for "as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." [r] Therefore the apostles did change the name of a famous disciple, called Joses, into a notion of this theme, and called him Barnabas, which is, being interpreted, "The son of consolation." [s] The rabbies of the Jews hold themselves very close to this doctrine, and would have it observed, that "the merrier the heart is in the Lord, the more capable it is of the Spirit of God:" partly, because Miriam, when she prophesied of the mighty acts of Jehovah, took a timbrel in her hand and danced: [t] partly, because that Samuel, after he had anointed Saul to be king over Israel, told Saul, "Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp; and they shall prophesy, and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man." [u] More emphatically, when Jehoshaphat called for Elisha to inquire of the Lord; says Elisha, "Bring me a minstrel: and it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him;" [x] that by the ravishing strains of music, his mind might be exalted into heavenly contemplations. Which is a great check to that drowsy dulness in devotion, which our late reformers have brought in, and have excluded the solemn melody of the organ, and the raptures of warbling and sweet voices out of the cathedral choirs. They that miss that

[u] Job ii. 4. [x] Matt. xvi. 23. [y] Gal. v. 22. [z] 1 Cor. xii. 3. [a] Luke vi. 46. [b] Nehem. ix. 20.
[c] Rom. v. 5. [d] 1 John ii. 20. [e] Verse 27. [f] James v. [g] Psalm xlv. [h] Acts ii. 41. [i] Verse 46.
[k] Psalm cxxii. 1. [l] Psalm lxvi. 1. [m] Jude ver. 20. [n] Prov. xv. 8. [o] Rom. xii. 8. [p] 2 Cor. ix. 7.
[q] Psalm xxiii. 4. [r] 2 Cor. i. 7. [s] Acts iv. 36. [t] Exod. xv. 20. [u] 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. [x] 2 Kings iii. 15.

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harmony, can best tell how it was wont to raise up their spirit, and, as it were, to carry it out of them to the choir in heaven. And beside, cheerfulness is not only an adjunct, or companion with all the works of grace, in that time they are bringing forth; but being done and finished, that which is "post nate," the after-birth, as I may call it, comes with such a gleam gliding over all the soul, with such serenity and peace of mind as cannot be expressed; our conscience bearing us witness that we have been conversant in doing the pleasure of the Lord, as it is, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world." [y]

Here I shall find work to heal the broken in heart, who look upon the fruits of their lives with no content in themselves, but are unsolaced, and cast down, because neither in number nor in weight have they brought in that which the Lord required: they look on their ways, and they find them crooked: they look on their heart, and they find it is not constant to good purposes. To whom I rejoin; if this proceed from penitence, from quick sense of sin, from humility, which is opposite to a self-justifying, they have cause to praise God, that they are thus affected. Let them look narrowly if this gold (for it may prove no worse) be current, when it is brought to the touch-stone; then they may lift up their eyes, and look cheerfully towards Christ; for it is no flattery to say, they are under his grace and mercy. Deal clearly, that you are astonished at your frailties, because you think you can never work enough, never shun sin enough; and though your conscience condemn you, God will afford you equity against the rigour of conscience; for He that searcheth the heart, "knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." [z] We are conceived in sin, and it is so intimate unto us, that we have no promise to be so spiritualized in this life, that we shall not often trespass. "God hath concluded all in sin, all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." [a] But it is one thing to fall into sin, another thing to run into it. One thing to be carried away by the passions of it, another to covet, and desire it. One thing to be overtaken in a fault, another thing to abide in it without repentance. And great odds between those that are given over to please themselves in filthiness, and between them that labour and desire to please God, though many times they attain not to perfect that willingness. The scope of the seventh chapter to the Romans, as I apprehend the mind of the apostle, is, to refresh our guilty consciences, that a regenerate man is not obnoxious to condemnation, though his flesh, upon some temptations, make him the servant of sin, because still in his mind he serves the law of God. And I am confirmed in that sense, because without all contradiction he teacheth the like doctrine: "The flesh and the spirit are contrary one to another, so that we cannot do the thing that we would."

And will the righteous God require more of a sick and feeble servant, than his best endeavour? Will not Christ accept from us the same that he did from Mary, that broke the box of ointment over his head; "She hath done what she could?" [c] Let a contrite heart, that would fain be righteous, remember the prayer of Nehemiah: "Let thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name:" [d] or the protestation of St. Paul; "We trust we have a good conscience, in all things, willing to live honestly." [e] But this desire and willingness must be without hypocrisy; not like iron that is gilded, base metal within, and rich without: it must be steady, industrious, instant to perform. Vehement holy desire is a great degree to perfection in our state; "For the beginning of wisdom is the desire of discipline," [f] but a lazy careless desire is a great token of imperfection. "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing;" [g] and again, "the desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour;" [h] like vagabonds, that when an officer catcheth them, will feign that they desire a service, and to be set at work: but take them at their word, and they will run away, that they may live in loitering, and upon other men's labours. St. Paul, provoking both rich and poor to liberality, according to their respective abilities, frames a rule upon that occasion, which is applicable to all good works. "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not." [i] Yea, in some cases, when I desire a good thing, I am at my furthest. I desire the appearance of the Lord Jesus at the great day. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. I can do no more. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I must do no more; for I must not attempt my own dissolution. I wish for the conversion of the Jews to the faith; I must not compel them. This holds in a few things. In the most willingness must show some practice; as in the same chapter: "Now, therefore, perform the doing of it: that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also of that which you have." [k] But to desire to do, and to do little, is a sign that there was little desire. This hath overthrown many, that they desire not to reach high. But we know that God gives his grace by talents, and not in petty sums, yet a lukewarm professor can be content with mites. Could such a one get a moderate competency of righteousness, knowing that "without holiness no man shall see God," then he would sit down, and let others strive, if they like it, to be tallest cedars in the house of the Lord.

There are many such indifferent disciples, that would be always babes, and never come to a manly growth; wrap themselves about with as many fig-leaves as would cover their shame, and think they want no more apparel. These, if they knew what it were to a dram, that would serve them to attain salvation,—they would reach so far if the grace of God would assist them; but would put themselves to no trouble to purify their body and spirit any further. Here is a pretence of desire to serve God,

[y] 2 Cor. i. 12. [z] Rom. viii. 27. [a] Rom. xi. 32. [b] Gal. v. 17. [c] Mark xiv. 8. [d] Nehemiah i. 11.
[e] Heb. xiii. 18. [f] Wisd. vi. 17. [g] Prov. xiii. 4. [h] Prov. xxi. 25. [i] 2 Cor. viii. 12. [k] Verse 11.

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but with so much laziness, with so much lethargy, that the Lord disdains it as dead carrion. He would serve God, and he would serve mammon. He approves much prayer, but he cannot attend it. He would not for all the world but be a christian; yet a small share in profit, or a snap at a little pleasure, will pervert him to be a dishonest christian. But real and holy desire stands up for much, though it cannot do so much honour to God as he would: like the disease "ephialtes," that oppresseth us in the night, between sleeping and waking, we would turn to the other side of the bed, and cannot. But to shake off this "incubus," it listens after all the noble exploits that the saints of God have done, and would exactly follow them; or, if it were possible, run before them: if not, it will be heartily sorry that frailty makes it come short of the best. It would compound for no less than to pay all, if it were able. Then you shall find the heart pant often with these inward yearnings: "Sweet Saviour, should any of thy servants love thee better than I? should any of thy disciples be more obedient than I? No, Lord: for none of thine are so much indebted to thy passion, because none had so many sins to be forgiven. How amiable are thy commandments, O Lord of hosts! my soul thirsteth to be the nearest of them that shall stand before the presence of the living God. Lord, let me love thee as Peter did; Lord, let me love thee more than these!"

So I have revealed the first comforts flowing from the Holy Ghost, by his inhabitation and inward testimony: and the next comforts by the fruits of righteousness, and those sincere desires of godliness, which, by Christ's merciful interpretation, supply our failings. All which I conclude out of our church-song made to the Holy Ghost.

"Visit our minds, and into us
Thy heavenly grace inspire,
That in all truth and godliness
We may have true desire."

CHAPTER IV.

Prayer is the great Instrument of a Christian's Comfort. Concerning Prayer, three things to be considered; I. *The Substance or Matter of Prayer, in three Heads;* 1. *Thanksgivings;* 2. *Supplications;* 3. *Intercessions:* II. *The Qualifications of them that pray:* III. *The Fitness of Time for Prayer.*

THE order laid down in the beginning, carries me to the fourth part of christian consolation,—the heavenly delight of prayer. It is the lively expression of faith, the ambassador which hope sends to God, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit, our advocate unto our Advocate Christ Jesus; our incense, whose smoke ascends up, and is sweet in the nostrils of the Most High; which promiseth such abundant success, that humility had rather conceive than utter it, lest we should seem to boast. A lowly supplicant to God never rose up from his knees, without some stirrings of gracious expectation, nor without a prophetical instinct that the mercy of the Lord was nigh at hand. Which fortunate presage Isaiah confirms unto us,[a] "I will make them joyful in my house of prayer." And how readily may we use this mighty ordinance of God! how soon it may be done, if we have a mind to it! What freedom have we (no man can deny it) to utter a brief prayer, and very often, if we will, in the greatest toil and business! "The tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak elegantly."[b] It is so facile a part of religion, as he that hath a tongue can scarce miss it. It is as easy to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," as to see heaven, which is always in our eye. Every sect of pagans and idolaters were taught by instinct to fly unto it "ex tempore;" as the heathen mariners cried every man to his god.[c] An atheist, falling into a sudden danger, as suppose a pistol were put to his breast, would cry out as soon to God to help him as any true believer. And he that, upon deliberation, did say there was no God, will break out into a confession, before he is aware, that there is a God, by natural impulsion. A poor whelp hath found a way to lick its own sores whole with its tongue; so when we are oppressed with misery, whether the evil of sin or the evil of punishment, we are prompted, by the natural notions of our soul, to lick the sore with our tongue; that is, to call for help from heaven. That soul which God did breathe into man, cannot shake off this principle,—that all succour comes from above, for which it must breathe out itself unto God. No creature among beasts but, being smitten, will fall upon the way to relieve itself, except a blind, incogitant sinner. Such as have written upon their sagacity in that kind, tell us, that the fishes in the fresh water, being struck with a tool of iron, will rub themselves upon the glutinous skin of the tench to be cured. The hart, wounded with an arrow, runs to the herb dittany to bite it, that the shaft may fall out that stuck in his body. The swallow will seek out the green tetterwort, to recover the eyes of her young ones, when they are blinded. Only a stupid sinner forgets how to redintegrate his miserable estate, by throwing himself down prostrate before God

[a] Chap. lvi. 7. [b] Isaiah xxxii. 4. [c] Jonah i. 5.

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in humble petition. He walks forward, lost to himself, lost to his right wits, because he hath no knowledge, or no good opinion, of the comfort of prayer. Which is my purpose to make him learn, by that which follows, looking upon, I. The substance or matter of prayer: II. The qualification of him that prayeth: and, III. The fitness of time when prayer is to be made.

I. The "matter of prayer" is as copious as all occasions that can be named; it will suffice for my purpose to treat of three heads: "Glorifications with thanksgivings, Supplications, and Intercessions."

1. The first is bent to magnify the Almighty, to extol his name, to praise him for his goodness. This is the Hallelujah of David, and of the saints in heaven; that is, Give glory to Jah, or the great Jehovah; which is followed with a rare variety in the song of the three children: "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise him, and magnify him for ever!" It is a ditty that is balsamed all over with a profusion of delight, to praise God from all things that he hath made, from the centre of the earth to the top of heaven. And this is most divinely expressed in that which is called St. Ambrose's hymn in our common prayer: "We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." And let the servant of God that will listen to me, repeat it often and often: for it is a piece of devotion so sweetly spread out into the branches of heavenly praise, confession of faith, and devout petitions, that the like did never come forth since the time it was penned. Let me speak to others out of the sense of my own heart, and I may safely profess, that in the service and worship of God, I find nothing so delightful as to continue in the praise and honour of the Lord. If another contradict it, and say, that there are some means more aptly calculated, as I may speak, for the high meridian of comfort; he is he, and I am I, and I appeal from him to myself, what I find in my own motions and feelings. And "what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?"[d] And observe that in the prudent institution of our church, to hold forth the consolation we have in Christ, after the participation of his body and blood in the blessed sacrament, it teacheth us to break out altogether in a jubilee, "Glory be to God on high; we praise thee, we bless thee, we glorify thee," &c. For when we are full of that holy feast, and have eaten angels' food, we fall into the tune of angels, and signify immediately, before we depart, how much our spirit rejoiceth in God our Saviour.

But who knew better the mind of the Lord than the Spirit itself, in those admirable ecstasies of David? "Sing praises unto God; for it is pleasant."[e] "Sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely."[f] "Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob."[g] Every furrow in the book of the Psalms is sown with such seeds. I know nothing more certain, more constant, to expel the sadness of the world, than to sound out the praises of the Lord as with a trumpet: and when the heart is cast down, it will make it rebound from earth to heaven. This was the wisdom of the holy church throughout all the world, (till distempers put us out of the right way not long since,) to solemnize the praise of our Saviour upon the feast of Christmas, Easter, &c.; that we might celebrate the great works which God hath done for us, "with the voice of joy, and praise, and with a multitude that kept holiday."[h] O give thanks unto the Lord, by telling of his mercy and salvation from day to day: Give thanks unto him with cheerfulness, for a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful. Who is a just man, and fair conditioned, that would not pay a debt, and be exonerated of it? He that can say he hath paid what he owed, is it not quietness to his mind to be discharged?

It goes further a great deal, and brings more advantage, when we offer up the sacrifice of retribution, the incense of thanksgiving unto the Lord; for we draw on more benefits, when we declare the goodness of the Lord upon the receipt of the old. And the gratuitum which God gives, is a thousand-fold greater than the present which we bring. This is proposed to them that will fly high from the pinnacle of the Lord's prayer, the first petition, "hallowed be thy name."

2. Neither let them faint, that stoop low in supplication: for mercy will embrace them on every side. Two things being put together are of much weight: we pray with God's Spirit, and by his word. He invites us in his word to pray, and he gives the gift with which we pray. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications."[i] Did he pour upon us his grace? and have we received a commandment, the outward sign of his will? and can we suspect, after all this, that he will put us off, and deny us? Is his grace given in vain? or hath he sent his word to delude us? He hath kindled a fire in our breasts, and it is a heavenly flame that burns within us. "Lord, though we are vile and despicable, thou canst not despise the acting of thine own Spirit, nor frustrate thine own operations. Or do we come unbidden, when we cast ourselves down in thy presence? Nay, Lord, thou hast beckoned and called us: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." Hold fast to these two, and who can forbid us to be comforted? The Lord bids us pray, and he gives us a heart to pray. For it is not strange to his mercy (perhaps it is strange to man's conceit) to give us strength to bring forth that obedience, both to will and to do, which himself hath commanded:—as he gave the blessed Virgin strength to bring forth the babe, who was conceived and formed in her womb by the Holy Ghost.

This I do the rather enforce, because we can see no comfort in ourselves: therefore, as I derive all the virtue and spirituality that is in prayer, from the efficacy of grace—so I refer all the success to Christ, in whom "we are blessed with all spiritual blessings."[k] "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in

[d] 1 Cor. ii. 11. [e] Psalm cxxxv. 3. [f] Psalm cxlvii. 1. [g] Psalm lxxxi. 1. [h] Psalm xlii. 4. [i] Zech. xii. 10. [k] Eph. i. 3.

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my name, he will give it."[l] But he and his Father are one; therefore he says, "If ye shall ask the Father any thing in my name, I will do it."[m] If we had no better means to God than ourselves and our own merits, there were no hope to speed; nay, our hearts would be as faint and dead as if we heard ourselves denied before we had opened our lips: but we conclude as it is in the most of our collects, "through Christ our Lord." When we bring that name in the rear, and quote him for our merit and Mediator, then I know it will be well, and that the Lord will hear the petitions of his servants. Should we not put our requests into Christ's hand to offer them to his Father, Sion might spread forth her complaints, and there would be none to comfort her; and we might remain for ever in that heavy plight. "I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed."[n] But if we renounce our wretched selves, and imagine not the least intrinsical perfection to be in our prayers, do we sail then by the cape of good hope? Yes; because God is contented to yield upon such addresses. Jacob may wrestle with the angel all night, and protest he will not let him go till he have blessed him. But "victus est quia voluit:" God "was overcome, because he would be overcome" of Jacob: he lets us prevail, because he is willing to yield; but there is no strength in us to win, if he would not suffer himself to be vanquished.

There is no other person but Christ, in whom the Father (I know not what kind of necessity to call it) cannot but be well pleased; which made him say before his disciples,[o] "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I know, that thou hearest me always:" as it is also,[p] "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, was heard for his piety." This is the pre-eminence of our High Priest, who is an orator for us all, that the Lord cannot reject his prayers. Therefore, committing our daily orisons to our High Priest, to bear them into the holy of holies before his Father, they are in a sure hand: and "they that know his name, will put their trust in thee:"[q] much more they that know his office perfectly. Wherefore let prayer carry on these considerations with it; that we are invited by God to that duty; that the Spirit instigates us unto it, and "helps our infirmities."[r] That it is presented to the Father by the mediation of the Son; then how canst thou be sad, O my soul, and fear to miscarry? Is not the lot fallen unto thee in a pleasant field? and mayest thou not promise to thyself a very goodly heritage?

II. Without all dispute, then, proceed unto prayer, and for a beginning, 1. "Ask in faith;"[s] that is, attribute unto God that he is almighty, and can do above all that we can ask or think: consent to his truth, that he is faithful in his promises: for he that believeth not those, makes God a liar. Acknowledge his goodness and mercy through Christ, that he will withhold no good thing from them that live a godly life. Let there be no wavering, no disputing about these attributes of God, lest we be condemned out of our own mouth. So much faith, so much efficacy, so much confidence, so much comfort in prayer.

Then will a solicitous christian reply, "What will become of me? I have not that plenitude of faith; at least, in sundry occasions, I have it not to ascertain myself that I shall prevail with God." No more had Abraham himself a perfect faith without any flaw. Excellent things are spoken of him, "who against hope believed in hope; and that he staggered not at the promise, but was strong in faith."[t] Yet see how he stooped a little: "Shall a son be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah that is ninety years old bear? O that Ishmael may live!"[u] God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss in every convulsion of faith:—which appears,[x] "I said in my haste, I am cast out of thine eyes: nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplication, when I cried unto thee." You must be sure that, in general, David subscribed to the power, and truth, and goodness of God: but there was a temptation upon him at that time, in some particular case, in which he distrusted, or doubted that there was no likelihood to prevail. But if there be such a one that says, "I will pray, but I know I shall be never the better," he is an infidel, and mocks God: in that bad mind he did well to say, "he should be never the better;" for he did usurp a form of godliness, and denied the power thereof.

He is the right supplicant, but a very rare one, that hath no staggering or diffidence in his heart, that comes close up to our Saviour's rule, "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."[y] Yet the Lord will not cast them off, who are but in the next form, and do not resolutely promise success unto themselves in the instant of their present supplications: but bear it thus between faith and doubting, "whether I shall succeed in this or that, I am not confident, but of this I am most assured, that I shall be the better for my prayers. And I would it were thus and thus, because I conceive it would be best for me: but I am certain it will be better than the best that I can imagine, which the Lord knows to be most expedient."

Another, perhaps, may wrangle himself into an error, and say, "How do the heathen and the wicked obtain good things, if nothing will prevail with God but the prayer of faith?" Consider that even a pagan and idolater would never pray, but that they have some kind of belief to obtain fruit by their prayers. The king of Nineveh had a solemn fast at the hearing of Jonah's prophecy; "for," says he, "who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"[z] None but a lunatic would ask for relief from them, that hath neither knowledge of his case, nor power to redress it.—"O, but the prayers of such are not grounded on the faith that we speak of." It is true,

[l] John xv. 16. [m] John xiv. 14. [n] Psalm lxxvii. 3. [o] John xi. 41. [p] Heb. v. 7. [q] Psalm ix. 10.
[r] Rom. viii. 26. [s] James i. 6. [t] Rom. iv. 20. [u] Gen. xvii. 18. [x] Psalm xxxi. 22. [y] Mark xi. 24. [z] Jonah iii. 9.

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such a faith as possessed idolaters, is not that which impetrates mercy from God. Then I say, neither Jews, nor Mahometans, nor wicked men, get any thing by that prayer, to which the promise is made, "Ask, and ye shall have." For whether they pray or not, all that they obtain had come to pass, though they had held their peace. It is for our sins, and to scourge us, that they have kingdoms, and victories; it is not their motley faith that did purchase them. And for all manner of store and plenty that the earth yields to them, it is but as God gives fodder to the cattle, and meat to the young ravens that call upon him.

2. The prayer of faith, then, is only available, but out of the mouth of an humble suitor. For who will give an alms to a proud beggar? "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity; I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."[a] Let the comparison between the publican and the Pharisee remain for ever in our memory.[b] The prayer of the poor destitute, the contrite, the penitent, the bleeding heart, is a sacrifice well seasoned with the salt of anguish and misery. Away with high looks and high words. "Lord, thou dost hear the desire of the humble, and dost prepare their heart."[c] And "God comforteth those that are cast down."[d] Put yourself back, who art but dust and ashes, in a great distance from the Lord, that you may behold him the better in his infinite greatness. And a lowly heart will never spare to deject the body. "O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker." Solomon prayed upon his knees;[e] so did Daniel;[f] so did Peter, when messengers came to him from Cornelius;[g] so St. Paul: "For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus."[h] And not only men upon earth, but the glorious spirits in heaven, cast themselves and their crowns down before him that sitteth on the throne.[i] Nay, the Son of God fell down upon his knees, and prayed unto his Father.[k]

And fasting, which is a pregnant circumstance of humiliation, was much in use with prayer; the instances are innumerous, to signify we had no part in any comfort, nor any delight in the creatures, till we were reconciled to the Lord. So was sackcloth used; and all apparel of beauty, all ornaments of riches and pride, were put off for that time. Let them be no more than outward circumstances; yet they are significant.

But that which is a sure companion, and most intimate to humility in prayer, is patience. It breaks not away in a pet, because it is not answered at the first or second asking: that is disdainful and arrogant. It holds on, and attends, and cries till the throat is dry: "I waited patiently for the Lord."[l] And there must be "patient continuance in them that seek for glory and immortality."[m] Faith is the foundation of prayer: and, to continue the metaphor, patience is the roof. The winds blow: look to the foundation, or the building will fall. Rain and storms will descend: but if they light upon a roof that is close and compact, they run aside, and are cast upon the ground. He that expects God's pleasure from day to day, will neither faint nor fret, that his suit hangs long in the court of requests: such storms as proceed from murmuring, cannot beat through a solid roof. Says Habakkuk,[n] A great thing will the Lord bring to pass, but not presently, says the Lord: "the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come." Many diseases will never be cured well, unless they be long a curing; and many deliverances will never be thoroughly settled, unless they be long a preparing; and many mercies are hid, like seed in the ground, and will be long a growing.

I give God thanks that every blessing of worldly comfort that I prayed for, the longer I was kept from it, and the more I prayed for it, I found it the greater in the end.

Observe that there is nothing of moment, yea, be it of lesser and vulgar size, with which the providence of God hath not interwoven a thousand things to be despatched with it, which require time, perhaps seven years, to finish them. Expect, therefore, from the Divine wisdom, to do all things in their order; and give honour to the supreme Majesty to wait his leisure. "For yet a little, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry."[o]

3. The third thing which gives assurance of comfort to prayer, is, zeal, devotion, fervency, which will pluck on patience further and further. For he that is zealous in any thing will not easily give over till he have brought his ends to pass. Zeal is a continual and an earnest supplicant, it prays "without ceasing;"[p] prays "exceedingly;"[q] asks with confidence, seeks with diligence, knocks with perseverance. A swarm of bees, that is, many thousands, must gather into a hive to fill it with honeycombs: and a swarm of prayers is sweeter before the Lord than the honey and the honeycomb.

Likewise, it is as vehement as it is assiduous, "labouring fervently for you in prayers."[r] Stir up your wit, and diligence, and memory, and meditations, when you come to spread out your wants before your Father: but if you yawn out your heedless, heartless petitions, you shall depart with discouragement; as it is,[s] "O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry with the prayer of thy people?" The Laodiceans were lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, in the worship of God: therefore, the Spirit said to the angel of that church, "Be zealous, and repent."[t] Zeal is defined to be "a vehement and inflamed love." There must be an ardour, and a flame in prayer, as if we would mount it up like fire

[a] Isaiah lvii. 15. [b] Luke xviii. [c] Psalm x. 17. [d] 2 Cor. vii. 6. [e] 2 Chron. vi. 13. [f] Chap. vi. [g] Acts x. [h] Ephes. iii. 14. [i] Rev. iv. [k] Luke xxii. 14. [l] Psalm xl. 1. [m] Rom. ii. 7. [n] Habak. ii. 3. [o] Heb. x. 37. [p] 1 Thess. v. 17. [q] 1 Thess. iii. 10. [r] Coloss. iv. 12. [s] Psalm lxxx. 4. [t] Rev. iii. 19.

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to heaven. Then we may say, that a seraphim hath laid a coal from the altar upon our mouth, and touched our lips.[u] Zeal takes away the soul for a time, and carries it far above us. I write to them that have felt it, that it darts a man's spirit out of him, like an arrow out of a bow. This is it which infallibly begets hope, comfort, patience, all in a sheaf,—as they are divinely put together:[x] "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer."

The transportment of zeal will excuse, or rather commend some ejaculations of prayer, which seem to be too bold with God; as, "How long wilt thou turn away thy face from us, O Lord? and forgettest our misery and trouble."[y] So, "Why shouldest thou be as a man asleep? and as a mighty man that cannot save us?"[z] And we do but follow our Saviour's pattern in it upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Tell not a troubled heart that is in anguish, tell it not of modesty: it is a compliment it will not be tied to. The Shunamite, swallowed up in sorrow for the loss of her child, runs to mount Carmel to Elisha, and before she said any thing, she caught him fast by the feet. Gehazi thought it irreverent and unwomanlike behaviour, and laid hold to thrust her away: "Let her alone," says the prophet, "for her soul is vexed within her."[a] The passions of an afflicted soul have much indulgence to break out far. They are not in good compass, till vehemency of zeal carry them beyond ordinary rule and fashion. Mary Magdalen did more than this the first time she came to our Saviour;[b] she came into a strange house without leave and admittance; into the house of a Pharisee, and those hypocrites would not admit suspected sinners: she takes opportunity to come at dinner-time, being a guest unbidden: she gives no salutation to the company, but falls down at our Saviour's feet, and lays her kisses thick upon them: says a holy writer to it,—it is Gregory the Great,—"Hast thou no forehead, woman? hath modesty quite left thee?" And he answers himself, "Minimè, pudor intus erat:" "that which she was ashamed of, was within her;" she was so ashamed of her sins, that she forgat all other shamefacedness. You see that zeal will pardon boldness, and will give authority to prayer to expostulate with God, and hath a toleration, as it were, to quarrel with his mercy.

Now a christian, sensible of many imperfections, will cry out, "O that I could attain to some degrees of zeal! I am no Shunamite, no Mary Magdalen, no Paul, fervent in spirit. I am carried away with distractions, when I speak unto the Lord in prayer; and through the multitude of various thoughts, I forget what I am about." O Christ, help our frailties, and keep our minds fixed upon thee, when we ask any thing in thy name. One body cannot be in two places at once: and one heart cannot be in heaven and earth together. O let us cover our faces with the wings of the cherubims,[c] that we may not see enticements to distract us. Watch and pray: watch this wandering heart, that it may not be stolen away by fancies, that move in our mind continually, like motes in the beams of the sun. Defy Satan, and bid him abandon. As they that have committed a robbery, run away from a hue and cry,—so the devil will run away from the noise of your supplications, when you challenge him for sacrilege, that he hath robbed you of your devotion.

To do more yet, I will assay to prescribe a remedy to a disease, I fear, not quite to be cured. But first feel your own pulse, and your fitness for the heavenly work of prayer, before you begin it. See that you be not drowsy and slothful; for a sluggard will be encumbered with various and recurrent thoughts. Neither would I have you to protract prayer to that length, which otherwise you would have done, when your mind and devotion fail you. Short and pithy prayers, collects well filled with words and matter, and not protracted till they may be censured for babbling, are more prevalent with God, when zeal doth manage them, than to spend out time without a fervent and well fixed intention. The prayers of the great men in Scripture are compendious, they are strong in sense, and speak home. A rose is sweeter in the bud, than in the blown flower: and what you abate at one time, in length, to anticipate distraction, you may fill up the measure when you will, by using them the oftener. I have known some servants of God, very circumspect in their ways, that use, for the most part, to read their prayers either printed or written, that seeing the matter of them before their eyes, they might the better contain themselves from all extravagancies. To which end, it is prescribed in the church of Rome, though a priest can say the mass by heart, yet he must read it out of his book, to keep the closer to the intention of his duty. But when all is said, happy are they that offend least in this kind: for all offend.

And whom can we blame but ourselves, that are remiss, and not half so earnest as we should be, to prevail with God? Which I demonstrate thus: let there be any thing in our prayers, which we are more eagerly set upon to obtain than all the rest, we will never start aside, nor run out of our circle when we come to that petition. "Animus est ubi amat," "The mind is with that, and in that which it loves." If we did long for every member of our prayer, as much as for that special thing, which we did so eminently desire, we would continue, from the beginning to the end of prayer, with little or no diversion.

This bottom is not wound up till I give a warning to zeal, as it is,[d] "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Look that your petitions be modelled into such things, as the word and Spirit do appoint, and stir you up to ask, and "you shall not be ashamed of your sacrifice."[e] But

[u] Isaiah vi. 7. [x] Rom. xii. 11, 12. [y] Psalm xliv. [z] Jer. xiv. 9. [a] 2 Kings iv. 27.
[b] Luke vii. 37. [c] Isaiah vi. 2. [d] Gal. v. 13. [e] Hos. iv. 19.

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if you be frivolous, the prophet will tell you again, "Ye have sown the wind, and ye shall reap the whirlwind."[f] Or the apostle tells you plainly, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss."[g] Ask for the kingdom of heaven, for the maintenance of God's glory, for newness of life, and obedience to the will of God; ask for pardon of sins in Christ Jesus, for grace in the Holy Ghost to resist temptations; ask our offended Father for mercy, to be delivered from the wrath which we have deserved: and let the seventh part of our prayer be for the things of this life, and for them with moderation, according to that port and person which we bear in the world, and be content with the portion allotted to you: aim by this level, and you hit the mark. What mighty blessings did fall upon Solomon, because he desired not the advantages of pomp and luxury, when God put it to him in a dream what to ask! He desired an understanding and a wise heart: and "the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing."[h]

3. Intercessions, that is, prayers wherein we meditate to God for others, must now be thought of, and the comfort redounding from them. The duty is strictly commanded, to pray for one another.[i] And, "I will that intercessions be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority."[k] When we do so, we have done what we are bidden: and having done that, albeit we are unprofitable servants to God, we are not uncomfortable to ourselves. For it is the first part of the reward of a good deed, that we can say to our conscience "we have done it." Beside, the work of love is delightful to the spirit; and to help others in our prayers is the largest and widest work of charity, willing to do good to all upon the face of the earth, and stretching forth its hands that the whole world may be better for the calves of our lips. Chiefly commending the whole state of Christ's church to God's mercy, yet also (as may be seen in our collect used on Good Friday) not forgetting to remember Christ for Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, to take from them ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of the word: not only that the sheep of Christ's pasture might be blessed, but that it might be well with Nero, and such as he, that were the lions who devoured us. This is charity, not only to have communion with all the saints, but compassion for all the world. Therein we follow the footsteps of Christ in his mediatorship, as far as we are able, who hath an "unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession for us."[l] And "who bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[m]

Likewise it is the office of those that have great interest in God's favour, to bless others with their prayers, as the Lord told Abimelech, king of Gerar, "Abraham is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live."[n] So he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, and to his two other friends, "My servant [Job] shall pray for you, for him will I accept."[o] All Israel had been destroyed for worshipping the calf in Horeb, "had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath."[p] "What!" says an old writer, "art thou, Moses, more merciful than God? art thou more pitiful to the people than he that saves us from all evil? No," says he, "thou art infinite short of the loving-kindness of the Lord; but he put thy charity to the proof, to see what vehement entreaties thou wouldest make for the deliverance of the nation." When the same people were like to be overrun by the Philistines, what course did Samuel take? Says he, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh," (which was a proseucha, or place for public prayer,) "and I will pray for you to the Lord."[q] "And you shall find most victorious success upon it."[r] What comfortable orators are the mighty saints of God! What a safeguard it is unto us all, when they live among us! "A wise man is the price and redemption of many fools," says a heathen: so a mediator that is very dear to God, is a protection not only to the good, but to the wicked that are about him. Have we not cause, then, to pray for the continuance of such, that they may live long to pray for us? Should Paul need to desire the prayers of the Thessalonians?[s] or of the Hebrews?[t] Could they forget that, which so much concerned their welfare? Now the worthy servants of the Lord may prevail much one by one: others of the common rank had need to meet by hundreds, and by thousands, in great congregations, that every single man's prayer may be a drop in a shower, that while every man prays for all, all may pray for every man. So great is the opinion of good consequents from the intercession of God's servants, that infidels and ungodly, who thought it would be labour in vain to speak to God for themselves, have sued unto the saints on earth to prefer petitions for them. Darius, that worshipped false gods, sent to the Jews at Jerusalem, to "pray for the life of the king and his sons."[u] And they that persecuted Jeremy, besought him, "Pray for us unto the Lord our God."[x] And Simon Magus turned himself to Peter and the apostles to intercede for him, "Pray unto the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me."[y] This is the sum, that intercession of prayer, whether active or passive, whether it be to give or to receive a blessing, is exceeding full of consolation.

2. To go in order to the next head: Who they be that shall get benefit and comfort by prayer, is quickly defined. We know that "all things work together for good to them that love God;"[z]—to none other, you may be sure. He that doth not truly call the God of heaven his Father, as Christ begins his prayer,—shall have no share in the portion of sons. We may intercede for profane and impenitent men, and our prayer shall return into our own bosom. But while they remain such, the mercies of the Lord will be strange unto them. They are not of the body of the mystical church, and all the fresh

[f] Hos. viii. 7. [g] James iv. 3. [h] 1 Kings iii. 10. [i] James v. 16. [k] 1 Tim. ii. 1. [l] Heb. vii. 25.
[m] Isaiah liii. 12. [n] Gen. xx. 7. [o] Job xlii. 8, 9. [p] Psalm cvi. 23. [q] 1 Sam. vii. 5. [r] Verse 10.
[s] 1 Thess. v. 25. [t] Chap. xiii. 18. [u] Ezra i. 10. [x] Jer. xlii. 20. [y] Acts viii. 24. [z] Rom. viii. 28.

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springs are derived unto them that are within the sanctuary. While the Jews continued under the hardness of their heart, God discharged the prophet for appearing in their behalf: "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee."[a] And with no less, or rather more severity,[b] "Though these three men, Noah, Job, and Daniel, were in the land, they should deliver none but their own souls." And if the wicked commence a suit in their own name, the Lord will not be entreated of them. What have they to do with holy ordinances, that have no fellowship with holy practices? To come before the Lord with a lap full of sins, and a mouth full of prayers, what an heterogeneal sacrifice is it! Will the Mediator, Christ Jesus, bring it for them before his Father? "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."[c] "And the throne of iniquity shall have no fellowship with thee."[d]

Many in our land, and in our days, pray for the confusion of them that brought all to confusion; but themselves are in pursuance of notorious crimes, and rebellion against God. They would advance that government, to which we have sworn to be faithful by the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; but they make no conscience to break their oaths and covenants, which they have made to God. It is not to suppress sin, and tyranny, and injustice, that they are instant with God; but to be revenged for their own injuries and losses. Their prayers are compounded with such sins as quite mar them. So many a pair of beads have been dropt in corners for the extirpation of the protestant religion. Many a mass hath been said for the good success of Jesuitical treasons. Many a rosary was run over to bring the powder treason to its bloody birth. If they have no better stuff than this in their matins, they had as good pray to devils as to saints. "I will that men pray, always or every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath."[e] Let go wrath, and malice, and bitterness. Holiness becometh the house of prayer, and holiness becometh the mouth of prayer. "If any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth."[f] Do justly, live chastely, give charitably, walk circumspectly, and then pray confidently. "For whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."[g]

But then will the trembling christian say, "Woe is me, for I am a great sinner; woe is me, for I am filthy, and polluted, and of unclean lips!"[h] then how shall I turn me to my God in prayer? O thou that fallest low upon the earth, oppressed with the burden of thy sins, stand up, and be cheerful before God: none is fit for prayer in the militant church but such an humble sinner. God draws thee, and none but those that are like unto thee, near unto his mercy. Though thy sins do cleave unto thee, be comforted that thou dost not cleave unto thy sins. Elkanah gave a more worthy portion to Hannah, that was barren, but meek and devout, than to Peninnah, that bare him sons and daughters, but was proud and scornful.[i] God that heard his beloved Son, when he made prayers for sinners; will hear those sinners that are his sons, when they ask any thing in the name of Christ.

3. Good fruit must be brought forth in a good season, which only remains to be thought upon, and to be added to the consolation of prayer. "For every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."[k] But neither days, nor hours, nor seasons, did ever come amiss to faithful prayer. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice:"[l] which includes all the space of duration; for all time is included in "morning, noon, and night." "Pray without ceasing."[m] "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."[n] Short passes, quick ejections, concise forms and remembrances, holy breathings, prayers like little posies, may be sent forth without number on every occasion, and God will note them in his book.

But all that have a care to walk with God, fill their vessels more largely as soon as they rise, before they begin the work of the day, and before they lie down again at night: which is to observe what the Lord appointed in the Levitical ministry, a morning and an evening lamb to be laid upon the altar. So with them that are not stark irreligious, prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the skies drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass,—yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer, twice a day, is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall into a full shower of prayer: choose out the seasons in your own discretion, when prayer shall overflow, like Jordan in the time of harvest.

Keep strictly, as much as you are able, to those times of the day, which you have designed to appear in before the Lord: for then you offer up not only your prayers, but the strict observation of set times, which is a double sacrifice, and an evidence that you will not dispense to pretermit that holy work for any avocation. He that refers himself at large to pray, when he is at leisure, gives God the worst of the day; that is, his idle time. I account them prudent, therefore, that are precise in keeping canonical hours of prayer, as they call them, so they pray to God alone, who alone knows their heart: and so they pray "with the Spirit, and with the understanding;"[o] that is, in a tongue wherein they know what they say, and understand the language wherein they vent the meditations of the Spirit.

[a] Jer. vii. 16. [b] Ezek. xiv. 14. [c] Psalm lxvi. 18. [d] Psalm xciv. 20. [e] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[f] John ix. 31. [g] 1 John iii. 22. [h] Isaiah vi. 5. [i] 1 Sam. i. 5. [k] Eccles. iii. 1.
[l] Psalm lv. 17. [m] 1 Thess. v. 17. [n] Ephes. vi. 18. [o] 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

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This was the milk that the church of England gave every day out of her breasts, to praise God in common prayer at set hours, before noon and after, in the assemblies of her devout children. How many have rejoiced to hear the chiming of bells to call them together, and would never miss their station! Thus "Peter and John went together to the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."[p] O, when will these profane days come to an end, that we may again, so orderly, so delightfully, appear before the living God?

Of one thing the devil hath disappointed us many years past in the time of prayer, which was the night-offices of prayer, called "vigils," which are disused, because it was feared they grew incident to scandal and uncleanness. And though they be left off (I believe for good reason) in a concourse of open meeting, yet let not God lose his tribute of prayer, which should be paid him in the still and quiet opportunity of the night. The day is God's, and the night is God's; the darkness and light to him are both alike; let not so many hours, as run out from our lying down to our rising up again, pass away without any prayer. Says David, "O Lord, I remembered thee in my bed, and meditated on thee in the night-watches."[q] It seems, while the tabernacle of Moses stood, that the priests did some duties in it all night long.[r] "Bless the Lord, ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord." The apostle allowed "widows must continue in supplication and prayers night and day;"[s] and Anna, the widow-prophetess, "served God with fasting and prayer night and day."[t] The Lord hath foretold that "he will come as a thief in the night at the great day."[u] Therefore, O Lord, with my soul will I desire thee in the night, and at midnight will I think upon thee, and call unto thee; that if it shall be this night, even now, when Christ Jesus will come to judge the world, my soul may find mercy from him, and both body and soul may be glorified, and so continue with him for ever.

All this about the opportunity of time, shall shut up with one institution of the psalmist:[x] "Every one that is godly, shall pray unto thee, O Lord, in a time that thou mayest be found." When you find stirrings and impulsions more than ordinary to provoke you to prayer, follow the admonition of the Spirit, and let not such a time slip. You know not whether such a Divine presage may roll in your thoughts again. I make no question but there are some critical moments, wherein God offers more than he will do again, if you neglect him, when he courts you with so great advantage. But now change the case from mine to the whole nation's, from private to public, then thus I will be peremptory in my resolution: There is no time too late for any christian that lives, in his single person, to beseech God to be merciful to him; he may find the same propitiousness that the penitent thief did: but there may be a time too late to save a kingdom or a state from ruin, when the Lord hath decreed the period of it. Therefore, when confusions threaten and begin to peep out, watch them betimes, and let the whole land pray for peace, and let the governors prepare conditions for it, to avert public calamity. If you let tumults and conspiracies grow to a head, it will be in vain to struggle by monthly or weekly humiliations, when our destiny is unavoidable. Plutarch says, that a discontented person challenged the oracle of Delphos, that it never gave a comfortable answer. "That is your fault," says the oracle, "for none of you come to me till your case is past help." "Venimus huc lapsis quæsitum oracula rebus," says the poet, that ever keeps decorum in his verses. Therefore, awake right early: seek the Lord in the first season, that the course of misery may not wax too strong and remediless. Otherwise the prophet will say, "The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it;"[y] and then whither will ye fly for help to be delivered? But prevent such dismal tribulations, while it is called to-day: for nothing is more consolatory than seasonable supplication.

CHAPTER V.

How the Sacraments minister to a Christian's Comfort. A General Survey of Sacraments. Five Reasons why God ordained two Sacraments under the Gospel. What Comforts flow from the Grace of Baptism. What Comforts flow from the Lord's Supper.

THOUGH by that which hitherto hath been set forth, I trust I may assume, that every one that sets his heart to make use of it, hath drunk well; yet, as the ruler of the feast said at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, "I have kept the good," that is, the best, "wine until now:"[a] the water of life in baptism,—the wine that delighteth the spiritual thirst in the Lord's supper. Other things in the word report unto us what a good land the Lord hath promised to his Israel; but these two sacraments are Caleb and Joshua, spies that have seen and searched the land, and bring us sensible and sure tidings, that it is a noble land, flowing with milk and honey; by the grapes which they have brought with them, and by their ocular and diligent survey, they yield evident testimony that God hath provided a

[p] Acts iii. 1. [q] Psalm lxiii. 6. [r] Psalm cxxxiv. 1. [s] 1 Tim. v. 5. [t] Luke ii. 37.
[u] 2 Pet. iii. 10. [x] Psalm xxxii. 6. [y] Hos. ix. 7. [a] John ii. 10.

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gracious country for us in the kingdom of heaven. To put all my work of consolation into one prospect together, prayer, the best comfortable grace, is married to hope; the Holy Ghost gives it in marriage; faith is the priest that joins them together; and the two sacraments are the outward signs, by which they have declared their consent, as it were, by giving and receiving a ring, and by joining of hands.

First; I will treat of sacraments in general: then of each in particular by itself.

"A sacrament being a visible sign of inward grace, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof;" or, more at large, (which compriseth the end of all such outward signs,) "a token to confirm men's faith in the promises of God:"—observe first, that God hath condescended above all expression to our weakness, that he would have us to take notice of his mercies in gross and sensible things: a way that is framed to our level and dull apprehension. "For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth;"[b] that is purely a heavenly way. But some alterations have been admitted, to bring us forward in our own pace, that is, after human and bodily fancies. "Deus quandoque infantilia loquitur!" for our sakes, the Lord speaks in the Scriptures in a plain and vulgar emphasis, strangely beneath his infinite wisdom: as a nurse useth to babble to her infant, so he is pleased to give himself to our hands, to our eyes, to our taste, in common and obvious matter, but out of his surpassing wisdom, to make us more spiritual, by clothing religion in a bodily attire.

The church began in innocency, and yet it began with a sacrament, the Tree of Life,—instituted to keep mankind on earth immortal by tasting it, if Adam had not ambitiously eaten of the tree of knowledge.

When the old world was drowned, and repaired again, God told Noah,[c] "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth, that the waters shall no more become a flood, to destroy all the earth." This is the world's covenant, and not the church's; a covenant to save all the earth from a total deluge. And God is to be perceived, and to be thought of in that sign. The glory of the throne of God was "as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain; this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord:"[d] and so the same glory is figured in the rainbow.[e]

After this, it being not discovered who did openly and entirely profess the worship of the true God, Abraham was called out of Chaldea, and he and his family were embodied into a church, and received the sign of circumcision, as a mark stamped upon them, to be known to be those whom God had called out for his own, and did admonish them "to circumcise the foreskin of the heart:"[f] chiefly to imprint into them, that the promised Seed should come from that stock, in whom all nations should be blessed.

When Abraham's seed became a national church, before they could get out of Egypt, the blood of a lamb was sprinkled upon their doors, with a statute given upon it, that from thenceforth every family, at that time of the year, should give account for a lamb slain, and be eaten within their houses, till John Baptist's Lamb was slain to take away the sin of the world.

Under the like discipline they were trained up for a while in the wilderness, when Moses set up the figure of a serpent upon a pole, that they might look upon it, and live, that were stung by serpents.[g] The author of the Book of Wisdom writes divinely upon it. "That they might be admonished for a small season it was a sign of salvation,—and he that turned himself toward it, was not saved by the thing he saw, but by thee that art the Saviour of the world."[h]

Neither are we such perfect men under the New Testament, to be taught only by the words of holiness and truth, but are received into the covenant of grace, and preserved in it by mysteries signifying wonderful things to our outward senses, that we may suck, and be satisfied with the church's "two breasts of consolation;"[i] and be filled with the "two golden pipes, that empty the golden oil out of themselves."[k]

I stand upon the number of "two," because they are put together:[l] "The Israelites were all baptized in the cloud, did all eat the same spiritual meat, and all drank of the same spiritual drink." As good account for it is,[m] "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one spirit." Or learn it from St. John:[n] "Christ came not by water alone, but by water and blood. And there are three that bear witness, the Spirit," that is, the ministry of the gospel, "the water," that is, baptism, and "the blood," that is, the Lord's supper. I will not promise a precise testimony out of antiquity, which shall say there are but two sacraments under the gospel, and no more; but learned men have produced out of the fathers as much as amounts unto it, to them that will not be contentious. Justin Martyr,[o] to the emperor, speaks of these two marks, or professed signs of christianity, and no other. Tertullian against Marcion,[p] brings them that are married to baptism and the Lord's supper. St. Cyprian,[q] to Stephen, "Then they are sanctified, when they are born again by both sacraments." St Cyril and St. Ambrose, writing purposely of sacraments, speak but of two. St. Austin,[r] to Januarius, "Christ hath subjected us to a light yoke, to sacraments of the smallest number, easy in observation, excellent in dignity: baptism in the name of the holy Trinity, and the communion of Christ's body and blood;" and if any thing else be commanded in Scripture. And many allude to that number from Cant. iv. 5:

[b] John iv. 24. [c] Gen. ix. [d] Ezek. i. 28. [e] Rev. iv. 3. [f] Deut. x. 16.
[g] Numb. xxi. 9. [h] Chap. xvi. 6, 7. [i] Isaiah lxvi. 11. [k] Zech. iv. 12. [l] 1 Cor. x. 3.
[m] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [n] 1 Epist. v. 6. [o] 2 Apol. [p] Lib. iii. c. 51. [q] Lib. ii. ep. 1. [r] Ep. 118.

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"Thy breasts are like two young roes that are twins." Here is a brief survey, how God, in all ages, hath communicated with us in sacraments.

May the reason of it be discovered? Nay, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"[s] Yet it is no trespass against the sobriety of wisdom, to ask why christian religion depends so much upon visible sacraments?

1. It is to give faith a third manner of corroboration; and a threefold cord is not easily broken. First, God hath promised us all blessings in Christ: Secondly, He gave an oath for it unto Abraham, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation:"[t] Thirdly, After he had plighted both oath and promise, he hath given us holy signs to confirm it. When God hath both promised and sworn, durst we of ourselves have asked a sign to confirm it, to make us more believing? No, truly, we durst not; for "an evil and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign:" it were a great blemish in faith, if we should appoint God to lend us a crutch to lean upon. But God hath prevented us herein; and, as we say in the common prayer, "That which for our unworthiness we durst not ask," he hath supplied of his own accord, and hath instituted sacred signs, wrapt up in the creatures, of most ordinary use, to make it more easy to lay hold of the hope that is set before us.

2. Secondly; Every great deliverance in God's book was accompanied with some outward sign, to make it more comfortable upon so remarkable an impression. As Moses, being appointed to be the captain to lead Israel out of Egypt, was bade to cast his rod before the people, and to let it turn into a serpent, and return unto a rod again; to make his hand leprous, and whole again in an instant, by putting it into his bosom, and by drawing it out. And Moses showed these signs in the sight of the people, and they believed.[u] It would be tedious to recite the stories, of Asa, Hezekiah, Joash, &c. These were persuaded, by the signs of God, that he would visit them with a mighty deliverance. But there is no deliverance like unto that, which is brought to pass for us through the death and bloody passion of Christ. And the two sacraments are the remonstrance of that great salvation, which hath set us free out of the hands of all our enemies.

3. Thirdly; It is meet that great benefits should be fastened to our memories by a sure nail. Therefore, God distrusting man's memory, represents his greatest works of mercy in the ordinances of manifest signs to prevent forgetfulness. The help of some outward mark doth avail by experience, to bring that to mind that else would have slipt away. As upon occasion, we use to tie a thread about our fingers, or to unloose the gemmal of a ring, to make us mindful of a promise or some weighty business.

4. Fourthly; Though all our worship must hold its tenure, as it were, "in capite," from the Spirit, if we hope to have it acceptable to God, yet we are better capable of such worship by the opportunity of material conveyances. Only angels and blessed souls in heaven can serve God in the pure and immaterial zeal of their mind. But while we are clothed with flesh, the mind receives all it takes in from bodily objects; and what passeth in by the pipes of the senses, it is connatural to us to apprehend with more tenacity and fast hold.

Finally; As Christ descended into the womb of his mother, to walk with us upon earth, so God hath vouchsafed to offer his word and promise to us in the creatures of the earth; setting a seal unto the word, which makes the patent very valid, and of force and comfort. For if a commandment of promise were remarkable, that of honouring our parents, "the first commandment of promise" in the second table,[x]—much more is a seal and sacrament of promise remarkable. Doubt not, then, but as faith is our hand to receive Christ, so the sacraments are, as it were, God's hand to give him unto us.

Being past the general survey of visible sacraments, it is time to enter into the consideration of baptism; which God hath exalted to marvellous virtue and consolation, by his omnipotent appointment. The Jews, that first received it, will teach us, that they expected this new and gracious ceremony upon the coming of Christ. For "The priests and Levites sent to ask John, Why baptizest thou, if thou be not the Christ?"[y] &c. It seems they had a tradition, that baptism should come into the church with the Messias; which they derive, as I take it, from two of the prophets. Isaiah[z] states out a famous praise of Christ's kingdom; then it brings in this, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Sion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof." The other place is a plain prophecy of Christ's kingdom,[a] and he thus describes it: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be cleansed from all your filthiness." John made way unto this sacrament, and it came from heaven; therefore, the "Pharisees rejected the counsel of God, being not baptized of John."[b] But in the fulness of the gospel Christ confirmed it. For he that made the promise, was the only able person to set the seal to ratify it. Except his admired doctrine and his miracles, all things else about Christ did make no show to outward appearances, so he would go no higher in the institution of an outward sign of cleansing and regeneration, than to bring the people to a river to be washed, or to a vessel of water to be sprinkled. For faith is drawn through these narrow and abject means, that, like himself, have no comeliness "in specie;" and when we see them, there is no comeliness that we should desire them.[c]

[s] Rom. xi. 34. [t] Heb. vi. 18. [u] Exod. iv. 31. [x] Ephes. vi. 2. [y] John i. 25.
[z] Isaiah iv. 3. [a] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. [b] Luke vii 30. [c] Isaiah liii. 2.

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Nevertheless, it is fit we should be well taught in the contemplation of the hidden virtue enclosed in baptism, or else we could never think it worth our labour and obedience. Our Common Prayer-Book (a store-house of rare divinity) tells us what is to be expected at that laver for them that come to be baptized.

1. That God hath promised to be the Father of the faithful and of their seed, and will most surely perform and keep his promise with them; and by this introduction we are incorporated into the holy congregation. Behold, they whom we love above all others by nature, our children, are naturalized to be the citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and enter into it through this door of grace.

2. Secondly; As God did save Noah and his family from perishing by water, and safely led the children of Israel through the Red sea, while their enemies were drowned; so the millions of the nations whom God hath not given to Christ for his inheritance, are drowned in their own lusts and corruptions. But, O what a privilege it is to be among those few, that are received into the ark of Christ's church, to be exempted from the common deluge, and to be the faithful seed of Abraham, led through the channel of the sea, and baptized in the cloud, that went along with them, when the armies of the mighty are mightily consumed!

3. Thirdly; We may gather out of our church-office for baptism, that the everlasting benediction of heavenly washing affords two comforts: it signifies the blood of Christ to cleanse us "per modum pretii," as the price that was paid to ransom us from death; and the sanctifying of the Holy Spirit to cleanse us, "per modum habitûs," by his inbeing and celestial infusion: and both are put together in one collect, "that all that are baptized, may receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration." "There is no remission of sin without blood,"[d] says the apostle, meaning the invaluable blood of the Lamb of God.[e] And the heavenly thing is represented by the visible element of water; for there must be some aptitude between the sign and the thing signified, else it were not a sacrament;—that as water washeth away the filth of the body, so the blood of Christ delivereth our souls from the guilt and damnableness of sin. "The blood of Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."[f] The metaphor of cleansing must have respect to baptismal water. Again, "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood."[g] Where the Scripture speaks of washing from sin, it must be taken from the water of baptism, figuring the virtue of Christ's blood, that in the sight of his Father makes us white as snow. The scriptures indeed, strike most upon the other string, and more directly, as "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."[h] "He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost:"[i] and in many other places. Therefore, our liturgy falls most upon the purifying operation of the Spirit, to be shadowed in the outward washing of water. As when it prays, "Send thy Holy Spirit to these infants, and grant that they may be baptized with water and with the Holy Ghost:" and, "grant that all that are baptized, may receive the fulness of thy grace." Spiritual regeneration is that which the gospel hath set forth to be the principal correlative of baptism. O happy it is for us to be born again by water and the Holy Ghost! For better it were never to be born than not to be born twice.

God put a good mind unto us, and reform one great fault in us; which is, that, our baptism being past over a great while ago, we cast it out of our memory, and meditate but little upon the benefits and comforts of it. We are got into the church, and do in a sort forget how we got in. Whereas the whole life of a christian man and woman should be a continual reflection how in baptism we entered into covenant with Christ, "to believe in him, to serve him, to forsake the devil, the vanities of the world, and all sinful desires of the flesh." Water is a pellucid element to look through it to the bottom: so often look through the sanctified water, to see what Christ hath done for you, and what you have engaged to do for Christ. And there is no heart so full of blackness and melancholy, but will recover upon it, and be as fresh in sound health, as if it were filled with marrow and fatness. Well did St Paul put baptism among the principals and foundations of christian doctrine;[k] for all the weight of faith, sanctification, and mercy doth lie upon it. Recount this by particulars.

1. The first thought that my soul hath upon it is, that I am no longer a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God.[l] I am no more afar off, but made nigh by the blood of Christ, partaker of the privileges of the church, and called by the new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name,[m]—a christian.

2. Secondly; I find that I have gained to have the highest point of faith unfolded to me, which was but darkly discerned in the Old Testament, to confess the Holy Trinity, in which faith I was baptized. For because that mystery was revealed at Christ's baptism, it goes ever along with this sacrament; all nations being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

3. Thirdly; I observe that my christian engagement allows me not the liberty of sinning after the custom of the world; but obligeth me to the strict discipline of my Lord, to live holily, justly, and soberly, to walk in newness of life, as planted into the likeness of Christ's death, so to die unto sin; for "he that is dead is freed from sin."[n] In every thing, and at all times, I must remember what the sureties at the font, called godfathers and godmothers, did promise for me in my name; which the liturgy of Geneva retains in these words,—"Do you promise to warn this child to live according to

[d] Heb. ix. 22. [e] Verse 14. [f] 1 John i. 7. [g] Rev. i. 5. [h] Ephes. v. 25. [i] Titus iii. 6. [k] Heb. vi. 2. [l] Ephes. ii. 19. [m] Isaiah lxii. 2. [n] Rom. vi. 7.

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God's word, and make the law of God the square of his life to live by?" It is a binding ceremony, and we are brought up from our tender years in the knowledge of it, that we continually may feel the work of the ordinance, to have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water.[o] And "as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."[p] To put on Christ, is to follow Christ in the law of a new creature, and to perfect holiness; without which no man shall see God.

4. Fourthly; I have assurance that the Spirit is not disjoined from the water; for God's word cannot fail, that we shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."[q] The power given to keep the covenant makes it a covenant of grace; else we shall administer but the letter, and not the spirit. The outward act of man, unless we make ourselves unworthy, is certainly assisted with the increase of God. If the good effect ensue not, the sacrament doth not want its virtue, but the receiver marred it. Very much is to be ascribed to the word preached: it is a powerful means to convert us, and to save us. "Take heed unto thy doctrine, for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee."[r] And, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth in you."[s] The word disposeth and prepares: God is the efficient cause of our regeneration. Now this sacrament, whether we speak of infants, they are to call to mind how they received the outward seal of grace; or whether we speak of converts of ripe years, who, at the same time, were taught the virtue of it, it hath reason to work more powerfully and effectually upon their knowledge and affections, than doctrine alone: because Christ and his benefits are manifested in a sensible operation, which himself did dignify in his own person, at the waters of Jordan, and afterward institute it to be used by his disciples.

5. The fifth thing that I draw from hence, gives me exceeding consolation in Christ, that no man who is made the child of God, is in the damnable state of sin; therefore, in baptism, being made the adopted child of God, I have obtained the pardon of all sins, original and actual: as Naaman was cured of all his leprosy. "Who saved us by the washing of regeneration."[t] "Be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins."[u] So Ananias said to Paul,—"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."[x] Yea, but some will cavil, "Infants have not faith; and God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood: and he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."[y] I will not contend about it, whether baptized infants have a secret imperceptible habit of faith: I am sure there is innocency of life in them instead of faith. They that are of age to come to the knowledge of faith, must bring their own faith with them to the font: but for infants, they have privilege to be in church communion, by the faith of the church wherein they were born. There is another contest made by some, that, "Notwithstanding baptism, original sin remains in us all the days of our life." True: the sin is not blotted out in the infant, but it is blotted out of the book of God. And as actual sins are pardoned for Christ's sake, yet it cannot be brought about that they should never be done, which are done and past, but it is enough that they shall not be imputed: so original sin cleaves unto us; it is not cast out, for I feel it in me; but it is remitted.

6. For the complement of this subject, the largest and the longest comfort flowing from the grace of baptism, is, that we are to rely upon the covenant, made between God and us therein, for the remission of all our sins, which we commit after baptism to the end of our life. Far be it from me to say, that it sufficeth us to cast our eyes back to the covenant then made, as if the bare and historical memory of it did suffice to blot out sins; that is but an empty flash and a vapour of presumption. But this I say,—build upon the eternity and infallibility of God's truth; and then, by a true and sure grasping faith, joined with repentance, renew yourself in God's mercies by the promise of the old baptismal covenant. Repentance is a condition never to be omitted to lift us up again, when we have been overtaken with sins. But faith doth not comfort itself in the sincerity of repentance, which in us is ever imperfect, but in Christ's merits once for all, consigned to us in baptism. For the Scriptures speak indefinitely, that the laver of regeneration purgeth away all our sins; it doth not speak restrictively of sins past, as if it did operate no longer than in that moment, when the water is sprinkled: for baptism doth now, at the very present time, save us.[z] And some collect it out of that figurative place,[a] "Every thing where the waters do come, shall live." After a shower of rain hath fallen, and ceaseth, the grass continues to grow. By grievous and presumptuous sins we debar ourselves from the sense and comfort of the covenant for the present; yet when we repent, we come not to make a new covenant with God, but to beseech him to be gracious to us for the old covenant's sake; as an adulteress, if she be received again, and pardoned by her husband, is not new married, but accepted for a wife upon the first contract of marriage.

Take some examples of those in the New Testament, that sinned against God, and in their return again did not suppose the first covenant of baptism to be abolished, but they comforted themselves that the mercies promised them would hold firm, and not fail them. St. Paul challengeth the Corinthians,[b] that they had been adulterers, effeminate, and much of the like. Yet he speaks thus to them, "Ye are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus."[c] In the same manner he deals with the

[o] Heb. x. 21, 22. [p] Gal. iii. 27. [q] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [r] 1 Tim. iv. 15. [s] 1 Pet. i. 23. [t] Tit. iii. 6. [u] Acts ii. 38. [x] Acts xxii. 16. [y] Mark xvi. 16. [z] 1 Pet. iii. 21. [a] Ezek. xlvii. 9. [b] 1 Cor. vi. [c] Ver. 11.

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Galatians, who had embraced much false doctrine, mingled Judaism with the gospel: yet "as many of you as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ."[d] Can any thing equal all these heart-refreshings that swim in the pool of baptism? Therefore, in many ages past, the joy of the neophytes was excessive, that came to be baptized. Many torches were lighted, and carried before them, to show it was the day of their illumination. They came in white garments, and wore them constantly eight days together,—a most festival habit. Yet they affected too much to defer their baptism till their elder, nay, their later years, out of the erroneous principle, that baptism was the healing water for the remission of sins past: and they rather relied upon repentance than upon the baptism which they had received, for the remission of sins that did follow. Whereas repentance is not a new paction with God, but a return to the use of the old; a restitution, as it were, of our blood, when we had been tainted by committing treason against God; that is, repossession of mercy endangered to be forfeited. But were it a new covenant, we should have some new visible sign for it, which never was. Therefore, this is the very soul of mine and every one's baptismal consolation,—that, being once done, it seals pardon for all our sins, through Christ's blood, unto our life's end.

But as if many spouts should open into one cistern, so all comforts conspire to meet in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Nothing else but the actual enjoying of heaven is above it. The church, which dispenseth all the mysteries of salvation, can bring forth no better. Children that are come to age, can ask no more than the whole portion of their father's goods that come unto them: and what is that but the blood of Christ? and this is the New Testament in that blood. Christ is mine, his body is mine, his blood is mine, all is mine. "O be glad and rejoice, and give honour to the Lord God omnipotent, for the marriage of the Lamb is come."[e] And the Spirit saith, write, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."[f] It is much to be received into the covenant with God by the former sacrament: is it not more to be kept in covenant by the other? It is much in baptism to be brought from death to life: but what is life without nourishment to preserve it? This keeps us in the lease of the old covenant, that the years of it shall never run out, and expire.

This is food to keep us in health and strength, that we never decay and faint. By it we lay hold of the promise,—"My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."[g] Then why should I not imbolden my heart with holy security against all fears? for the Lord hath put himself into my hand, and into my mouth, and into my spirit: of what then should I be afraid? This is that courage which our liturgy sounds forth, as with a shrill trumpet, to all that come to this banquet well prepared. It begins, that "it is a comfortable thing to all them that receive it worthily;" it bids us "come with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience:" it proclaims aloud, Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly come unto him, "So God loved the world," &c. "This is a true saying," &c. It hath gathered the sallies of spiritual joy, as it were, into a bundle of myrrh. It adds, "Christ hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort." And if all this put together will not blandish our conscience, and stablish our joy, we would be dull and spirit-broken, though an angel from heaven should come and say unto us, as he did unto Gideon, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour."[h] For an angel of the Lord cannot plead so much to the solace of the heart, as the great Angel of the covenant hath done in these great demonstrations of love, as followeth.

1. First; As baptism was the former, so this is the second visible publication of God's apparent mercy. It is not a bare message, but a lively apprehension of them by palpable means: not in a vision, or a dream, but in a real object. Call to mind that the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice.[i] Once the Lord hath appeared unto us in the token of his love by water: and once again he appears unto us in the elements of his holy table. Twice he hath appeared to bless thee. Therefore, "eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart."[k] For if you turn away from comfort, when the Lord hath appeared twice unto you to give it you, he will be angry, and leave you to a thick darkness of sorrow, such as fell upon the land of Egypt.

2. Secondly; The Lord can appear comfortably unto us, though with a sword in his hand, and in the midst of a camp, as he did to Joshua:[l] or, in a flame of fire, as he did to Manoah:[m] or, in a tempest upon the sea, as he did to the apostles:[n] or, at the grave's mouth, as he did to Mary Magdalen.[o] But here he appears unto us in a feast, which is a time of innocent delight. The glory of God, which we look for, is set forth unto us in that which our senses apprehend for sweetness and pleasure: as, "I appoint unto you a kingdom—that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom:"[p] which is translated from bodily pleasure to spiritual, that, in the heaven of blessedness, the soul shall feed continually as at a banquet: of which we have now a taste in the kingly provision of Christ's supper. It is a kingly feast, although imparted in a little pittance of bread and wine: yet it is more costly and precious in that which it signifies, than Solomon and all his court had for their diet day by day.[q] We

[d] Gal. iii. 27. [e] Rev. xix. 7. [f] Ver. 9. [g] Isaiah liv. 10. [h] Judg. vi 12. [i] 1 Kings xi. 39. [k] Eccles. ix. 7. [l] Josh. v. 13. [m] Judg. xiii. 20. [n] Matt. xiv. 27. [o] John xx. 14. [p] Luke xxii. 29. [q] 1 Kings iv. 22.

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are brought to eat at the king's table, as Mephibosheth was, like one of the king's sons:[r] to eat together is a communion of more than ordinary acquaintance: do you note the endearing favour of God in that? And what are we, that are not thrust, as our kind might look for it, to gather up crumbs under the board, but to eat our portion before the Lord, with the Lord, out of the hands of the Lord? For he that brake bread, and gave it to the apostles, gives it to us, as our High Priest, though he be in heaven. I exhort you, therefore, to enter into the guest-chamber with a quiet and unshaken heart: for the Lord hath not invited us as Absalom did Amnon, to kill us; nor as Esther did Haman, to accuse us; but, as Melchizedec brought forth bread and wine to Abraham, to bless us. He gives us Asher's portion, bread that shall be fat, and royal dainties.[s] Only the case is altered, if Christ shall say, "The hand of him that betrays me, the hand of him that loves me not, the hand of him that believes not in me, the hand of him that will not keep my sayings, is on the table;" that wretch shall be thrown out, and be fed with bread of sorrow and water of affliction, nay, where there shall not be a drop of water to cool his tongue.

3. Thirdly; That which astonisheth the communicant and ravisheth his heart, is, that this feast affords no worse meat than the body and blood of our Saviour. Those he gave for the life of the world, these are the repast of this supper, and these we truly partake. For there is not only the visible reception of the outward signs, but an invisible reception of the thing signified. There is far more than a shadow, than a type, than a figure. Christ did not only propose a sign at that hour, but also he gave us a gift, and that gift, really and effectually, is himself, which is all one, as you would say, spiritually himself; for spiritual union is the most true and real union that can be. That which is promised, and faith takes it, and hath it, is not fiction, fancy, opinion, falsity, but substance and verity. Being strengthened with power, by the Spirit, in the inward mind, Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith.[t] As by a ring, or a meaner instrument of conveyance, a man may be settled in land, or put into an office; and by such conveyances, the ratification of such grants are held to be real; how much more real is the gift and receipt of Christ's body and blood, when conveyed unto us by the confirmation of the eternal Spirit! For observe, "it is the same Spirit that is in Christ, and that is in us, and we are quickened by one and the same Spirit."[u] Therefore it cannot choose, but that a real union must follow between Christ and us; as there is a union between all the parts of the body, by the animation of one soul. But faith is the mouth wherewith we eat his body, and drink his blood; not the mouth of a man, but of a faithful man; for we hunger after him, not with a corporeal appetite, but a spiritual; therefore, our eating must be spiritual, and not corporeal. Yet, this is a real, a substantial partaking of Christ crucified, broken, his flesh bleeding, his wounds gaping: so he is exhibited, so we are sure we receive him, which doth not only touch our outward senses in the elements, but pass through into the depth of the soul. For, in true divinity, real and spiritual are æquipollent; although with the papists nothing is real, unless it be corporeal: which is a gross way to defraud us of the sublime and soul-ravishing virtue of the mystery. "A mystery neither to be set out in words, nor to be comprehended sufficiently in the mind, but to be adored with faith," says Calvin.[x] But herein we pledge Christ in the cup of love; herein we renew the covenant of forgiveness strongly assured by the sprinkling of blood; the life is in the blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission of sins,—because death is the wages of sin. Sin is the greatest dishonour that can be done to God: and death in Christ's person is the greatest satisfaction that can be made. He died, and gave himself for me; he died, and gave himself to me, as he was dead in his gored and pierced body, that his sacrifice might be in me, and in all those that are redeemed by it. We read of some mothers, that, in a great famine, have eaten their own children;[y] but what mother, in the time of famine, did ever give her own flesh to save the life of her child? But Christ hath given himself for us, that we might not perish. "O Lord, I owe all my life to thee, because thou hast laid down thy life for me; O let me bleed out my sins, that thy blood may fill all the veins of my spirit; O let my body be transfigured to the heavenly by cleanliness and chastity, by being used only for thy worship and service, that the body of my Saviour may come under the roof of it. Then when the King shall set forth his table, and give himself to me in his wonderful feast, my spikenard shall send forth a sweet smell;[z] my soul shall magnify the Lord, and my spirit shall rejoice in Christ my Saviour."

"We have found the Messias," says Philip to Nathanael; and where have we found him? at a feast: a feast of his own body and blood, but set out with no more cost and show than a piece of bread and a sip of wine. In this manner, it is brought to pass by the omnipotency of God's pleasure to institute it, with the efficacy of a strong faith concurring to receive it. The church had done very ill, if, of its own head, it had made so mean a representation of Christ; but the Lord must be obeyed, and ought to be admired in the humility of his ordinance, who hath not given us rich viands, and full cups, but made the feast out of the fragments of the meanest creatures. Let them that will make themselves fit to be his guests, bring a preparation of humility suitable to the exility of those oblations. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied, they shall praise the Lord, and seek him;"[a] and at that season, let the riotous remember his fulness of bread, and excess of wine. God is honoured in a little, and his liberality is abused in the excess of his creatures. And it is worth the noting, that the elements which

[r] 2 Sam. ix. 11. [s] Gen xlix. 20. [t] Ephes. iii. 17. [u] Rom. viii. 11.
[x] Lib. Instit. c. 17. sect. 5. [y] 2 Kings vi. [z] Cant. i. 12. [a] Psalm xxii. 26.

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we are invited to take, are of fruits that grow out of the earth; to show that the earth, which was cursed for Adam's sake, is blessed for Christ's sake. As it brings forth thorns and thistles to call to mind our rebellion, so it brings forth bread and wine to call to mind our redemption. Neither doth God supply us with bread only out of the furrows of the earth, but sometimes it hath fallen out of the clouds of heaven. "Behold," says God, "I will rain bread from heaven for you."[b] This was "manna," called "the corn of heaven."[c] This was the spiritual meat or angels' food, in which the old believers in the wilderness did eat Christ with an implicit faith. Our outward sign is the bread of the earth, true bread that grows in the fields; yet the bread signified is that, which the "Father hath given us from heaven."[d] Bread is a great part of man's nourishment; so Christ crucified is the sole refection of faith. Bread is champed in the mouth to make it fit for the stomach; so the body of Christ was ordained to be slain, before it could profit us. "If the corn of wheat fall not into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."[e] By his life we learn to live, and by his death we are made alive. Bread, when it is ground between our teeth, and eaten, is turned by concoction into the substance of our body; which explains our mystical union with Christ, that we are made one spirit with him by faith, as this sensible food is converted into our flesh and bone.

Beside, in the several parts of the outward signs, it is God's meaning we should conceive how he loves the gathering together of many into one, which is thus to be qualified. At a common supper, or any meal, all that are at the board feed of the same meats; yet every one feeds to himself, and to none beside: so, every communicant eats Christ to himself, and the just shall live by his own faith. Nevertheless, it is a sacrament to combine, and to knit together, holding us fast into one communion, that there may be no breaking asunder of the parts and members. Many grains of wheat are kneaded into one loaf, many grapes are trodden, that their liquor may be pressed into one cup. We, being many, are one bread, and one body; for, "we are all partakers of that one bread."[f] Now, natural learning will teach us, what a comfort there is in union, and that fractions and dissolutions are painful and grievous. Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is! behold, what a strengthening to the mystical body to continue in one fellowship and breaking of bread, to link faith and love together in Jesus Christ! It was but one deliverance common to all Israel, whose solemnity was kept at the passover, though every lamb was eaten by itself in a several family; so, it is one cup of salvation which God hath given us to drink, though distributed to the faithful according to the multitude of persons; and it is one bread of which we do all eat, though some have one share of it, and some another. It is necessary that many pieces be broken off from one loaf, to typify the body of the Lord broken for us, and that the benefits of his passion are distributed among us.

There are many instances that are pregnant to prove, how pieces of something, broken and divided into many shares, do import a communication of somewhat among the dividers. The heathen, at the making of a league, did now and then break a flint-stone into pieces; and they that entered into a league, kept the parts in token of a covenant. Some upon a contract of marriage will break a piece of gold, and the two halves are reserved by the contractors. Shall I go further, and yet come nearest to our case? The Roman soldiers parted our Saviour's garment among them, and in that symbolical accident is shown, that the gentiles should share in the satisfaction of his death. So Peter takes this morsel of bread,—John, another, &c.; yet Christ is not divided. The same ticket, as it were, in words in substance, is put into every hand, on which is written, "Take and eat it in remembrance of me."

"Take it," says Christ: and be not afraid, as Saul was, to take a kingdom, since Christ hath appointed it; be not afraid, as David was, to be a king's son, since such honour is predestinated to thee. Take it, and fear not, as Peter did, saying, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man;" it is the Lord's delight to seek and to save that which is lost. Take it, and take heed you let not go your hold; the thing is fast and firm, if you do not let it go and lose it. Take it, but not to hold the pleasures of the world and your sinful lusts in your gripe together; if your hands be full of these things, you can never hold this. Take it, and take Christ with it; for he that made the testament in his blood, hath set the seal unto the testament, which gives you interest and possession of the redemption by his blood. Take it, and reach out your hand, to signify that you receive Christ with the hand of faith. They are too nice, for fear of I know not what, in the Roman church, of losing a crumb, or so forth, that they put the body of Christ into the mouth of their disciples: and in pretence that they give it as a mother doth her breast into the mouth of her child; whereas we receive this sacrament, not as babes, but as those that are grown to the measure of a good age. And if we be not worthy to take it into our hands, we are not worthy to receive it in our mouths. Take it, and eat it; for it is not enough to be sprinkled without, but to feed on Christ, and to digest him within. If upon the supply of corn, and beasts, and cattle, Paul might say, that "God hath filled our hearts with food and gladness;"[g] if we are glad of that which sustains us for a time, and yet we must die; how glad will we be to eat of that, as will give us such a life, that will endure for ever! "Eat of the forbidden tree," says the serpent to Eve, "and you shall not die;" but he lied unto her. Therefore, to dissolve the works of the devil, our Saviour hath appointed that which we shall eat, and assured the promise of everlasting life unto it. Eat, as Jonathan did of the honey-comb, that you may be lusty to pursue your enemies; and though Satan hath sworn your death, as Saul did Jonathan's;[h] the Lord will deliver you. Pine not away with

[b] Exod. xvi. 4. [c] Psalm lxxviii. 24. [d] John vi. 31. [e] John xii. 24 [f] 1 Cor. x. 17. [g] Acts xiv. 17. [h] 1 Sam. xiv. 44.

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the consumption of an evil conscience; but eat, and be strong in the Lord and in his mercy; as the spirit of the Egyptian, who was half dead, came to him again, when he had eaten a little.[1] Eat, and grind the bread between your teeth, to show the Lord's death. For Christ could have said,—"This is my body *slain*,—This is my body *crucified*," but he had rather say, "This is my body *broken* for you;" to show the great injuries of his sufferings. Eat, then, and remember you eat the body as it was broken; and remember that you drink the blood, as it flowed out of his wounds.

To keep these things in remembrance is the great design of the sacrament; an object which keeps the fancy of the soul waking, that otherwise, it may be, would fall asleep. In the sixth of St. John, Christ preacheth over and over of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood without a sacrament, by the power of faith. But to keep it in fresh and frequent meditation, the Lord hath given us a palpable and signal token, as if he would engrave it upon the palms of our hands, and upon the roofs of our mouths, upon the membranes of our brain, and upon the foreskin of our heart. This is a blessing twice, and twenty times given, because it is given that it may never be forgotten. They that love others, would live in the memory of those they love; it is because Christ loves us entirely, that he would be remembered of us. And no friend will say to another, "remember me when I am gone," but that he means reciprocally to remember his friend, to whom he spake it. If you will remember Christ, he will remember you. And the thief on the cross will teach you, that it is good to continue in his memory; "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." O blessed Christ! thou art good, and dost good: thou hast not only provided an invaluable benefit for thy church, but dost put it into our hands, that we may not lose it; and dost bring it into our eyes by clear ostension, that we may not forget it. We are apt to remember injuries and to forget benefits; unthankfulness will undo us, if we take not heed of it. O rub over your memory, and consider the noble works of the Lord, especially this great work, how he suffered for us unto death. Remember seriously this one thing as you ought, and God will let you forget nothing that will do you good. There is no grievous sin which we incur, but, for the present, Christ is forgotten, as if he had never come to charge us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. But look upon his wounds which bleed for our transgressions, and it will stanch the flux of sin, and make our hearts bleed, because we have forgotten obedience. In our distresses, our sickness, and losses, we cry out that God hath forgotten us, he hath forgotten to be gracious, and shuts up his loving-kindness in displeasure. But distrust him not; a mother cannot forget her child, much less such a father. Every tribulation which he inflicts, is but a thorn in our sides to prick us and awake us, because we have forgotten God.

And remember the death of Christ, not only casting your eyes back to the large histories of it in the Gospels, as if that would suffice,—but affectedly, practically, zealously; and then every thing else will come to mind to perfect holiness. When we remember his death, we are sure he is past death, and risen again, now to die no more, and that he is ascended into heaven, and makes intercession for us. We have obtained that faith that we partake in the New Testament of his blood, and that, our names being found in the Testament, we are heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ. The custom of the world will teach us, that an heir is bound to execute the will of the testator, to see every thing performed, that he hath charged and bequeathed. Do your part like a good executor, with a righteous administration in remembrance of him. But forgetfulness cannot creep upon us, when there is so visible a monument before us to bring it often into our thoughts. Luther says, "It will help a man more in the study of piety, to meditate profoundly upon Christ's passion one day, than to read over all the Psalms of David." A bold comparison: it will, indeed, ravish the soul with trembling, to consider how much Christ loved us, by how much he suffered for us; it will make us look upon sin with horror, which begat such torment and ignominy to the innocent Lamb of God; it will comfort our weak faith, that he who hath done so great things for us, will not abandon us,—and having subdued our enemies, will not let them renew the battle to overcome us: it will encourage us to lay down our life for him, who hath laid down his life for us. "My meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord."[k] He hath drunk up the cup of sorrow, that I might drink of nothing but the cup of salvation. This is the wine,[l] which, being given unto him that hath a heavy heart, confutes all the objections of infidelity, despair, an evil conscience, or whatsoever the tempter can suggest against the hope of my glorification. Says the son of Sirach,[m] "The remembrance of Josias was sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music at a banquet of wine." If the name of Josias was so precious for restoring religion, what melody is there in remembrance of Christ's name, what music in his banquet, which is the very mercy-seat, from whence the voice of the Lord gives the principal oracles of consolation! whose definition I have reserved to be the last words of all: "Consolatio est conveniens unio potentiæ cum objecto;" as our best scholars have it, "Consolation is convenient union of any faculty with its object." As when the eye meets with light, it is the comfort of the eye: when the ear meets with harmony, it is the comfort of the ear. What is the most transcendent consolation, therefore, but the union of the soul with God, the best object, in a real and most significative manner, the union of the Spirit with Christ in the sacrament of his holy supper! To whom be praise, and glory, and thanksgiving. Amen.

[1] 1 Sam. xxx. 12. [k] Psalm civ. 34. [l] Prov. xxxi. 6. [m] Chap. xlix. 1.

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THE

SECOND EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO

A NEW AND EASY INSTITUTION OF GRAMMAR,

1647.*

TO THE MOST HOPEFUL CHRISTOPHER HATTON, ESQUIRE,

SON AND HEIR TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD HATTON, OF KIRBY.

SIR,

ALL that know the infinite desires and the many cares, my lord your most honoured father hath of your education in learning and exemplary piety, will expound this address to you, as a compliance with those thoughts and designs of his, by which he intends hereafter to represent you to the world, to be a person like himself; that is, an able instrument of serving God, and promoting the just and religious interests of God's vicegerent and God's church. It is yet but early day with you, "Adhuc tua messis in herbâ:" but if we may conjecture by the most hopeful prognostics of a clear morning, we who are servants and relatives of my lord your father, promise to ourselves the best concerning you: and those are, that you will become such as your honourable father intends you, who had rather secure to you a stock of wisdom than of wealth, or of the most pompous honours. These sadnesses, which cloud many good men at this present, have taught us all, that nothing can secure a happiness or create one, but those inward excellencies, which, like diamonds in the night, sparkle in despite of darkness. And give me leave to tell you this truth, that however nature and the laws of the kingdom may secure you a great fortune, and mark you with the exterior character of honour,—yet your fortune will be but a load of baggage, and your honour an empty gaiety, unless you build and adorn your house as your father does, with the advantages and ornaments of learning, upon the foundation of piety. In order to which give me leave to help you in laying this first stone, which is cut small, and yet according to the strictest rules of art, but with a design justly complying with your end; for it is contrived with no small brevity, that since you are intended for a long journey, to a great progress of wisdom and knowledge, you may not be stopped at your setting out, but proceed like the sun, whose swiftness is just proportionable to the length of his course. For, sir, you will neither satisfy your honourable father's care, nor the expectation of your friends, nor the humblest desires of your servants, if you hereafter shall be wise and pious but in the even rank of other men.

We expect you to show to the world an argument, and make demonstration whose son you are, that you may be learned even to an example, pious up to a proverb: and unless you excel those bounds, which custom and indevotion hath made to be the term and utmost aim of many of your rank, we shall only say "you are not vicious, not unlearned;" and what a poor character that will be of you, yourself will be the best judge, when you remember who and what your father is. Sir, this freedom of expression I hope you will pardon, when you shall know that it is the sense and desires of one of the heartiest and devoutest of your honoured father's servants; who hath had the honour to have so much of his privacies communicated to him, as to be witness of his cares, his sighs, his hopes, and fears concerning you; and for the advantage and promotion of your best interests. I hope, Sir, that neither this monition, nor the present Institution of the first, but the most necessary, art and instrument of knowledge, will become displeasing to you, especially if you shall accept this testimony from me, that it is done with much care and choice: and though the scene lies in Wales, yet the representment and design is one of the instances for Kirby, and that it is the first and the least testimony of the greatest service and affection which can proceed from the greatest affections and obligations; such as are those of, Honoured Sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate servant,

J. T.

* See page v. of the Essay on the Genius and Writings of Jeremy Taylor.

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THE

GREAT EXEMPLAR OF SANCTITY AND HOLY LIFE,

ACCORDING TO THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION;

DESCRIBED IN THE

HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

EVER-BLESSED JESUS CHRIST,

THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

WITH CONSIDERATIONS AND DISCOURSES UPON THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE STORY, AND PRAYERS FITTED TO THE SEVERAL MYSTERIES.

IN THREE PARTS.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

AND MOST TRULY NOBLE LORD,

CHRISTOPHER LORD HATTON,

BARON HATTON OF KIRBY, &c.

My Lord,

When interest divides the church, and the calentures of men breathe out in problems and unactive discourses, each part, in pursuance of its own portion, follows that proposition, which complies with and bends in all the flexures of its temporal ends; and while all strive for truth, they hug their own opinions dressed up in her imagery, and they dispute for ever; and either the question is indeterminable, or, which is worse, men will never be convinced. For such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeal and fancy, and end not at all but in schisms and uncharitable names, and too often dip their feet in blood. In the mean time, he that gets the better of his adversary, oftentimes gets no good to himself; because, although he hath fast hold upon the right side of the problem, he may be an ill man in the midst of his triumphant disputations. And therefore it was not here, that God would have man's felicity to grow: for our condition had been extremely miserable, if our final state had been placed upon an uncertain hill, and the way to it had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move: for the man should have tended to an end of an uncertain dwelling, and walked to it by ways not discernible, and arrived thither by chance; which, because it is irregular, would have discomposed the pleasures of a christian hope, as the very disputing hath already destroyed charity, and disunited the continuity of faith; and in the consequent there would be no virtue and no felicity. But God, who never loved that man should be too ambitiously busy in imitating his wisdom, (and man lost paradise for it,) is most desirous we should imitate his goodness, and transcribe copies of those excellent emanations from his holiness, whereby as he communicates himself to us in mercies, so he propounds himself imitable by us in graces. And in order to this, God hath described our way plain, certain, and determined: and although he was pleased to leave us undetermined in the questions of exterior communion, yet he put it past all question, that we are bound to be charitable. He hath placed the question of the state of separation in the dark, in hidden and undiscerned regions; but he hath opened the windows of heaven, and given great light to us, teaching how we are to demean ourselves in the state of conjunction. Concerning the salvation of the heathens he was not pleased to give us account; but he hath clearly described the duty of Christians, and tells upon what terms alone we shall be saved. And although the not inquiring into the ways of God and the strict rules of practice has been instrumental to the preserving them free from the serpentine enfoldings and labyrinths of dispute, yet God also, with a great design of mercy, hath writ his commandments in so large characters, and engraven them in such tables, that no man can want the records, nor yet skill to read the hand-writing upon this wall, if he understands what he understands, that is, what is placed in his own spirit. For God was therefore desirous that human nature should be perfected with moral, not intellectual excellencies; because these only are of use and compliance with our present state and conjunction. If God had given to eagles an appetite to swim, or to the elephant strong desires to fly, he would have ordered that an abode in the sea and the air respectively should have been proportionable to their manner of living; for so God hath done to man, fitting him with such excellencies, which are useful to him in his ways and progress to perfection. A man hath great use and need of justice, and all the instances of morality serve his natural and political ends; he cannot live without them, and be happy: but the filling the rooms of the under-

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standing with airy and ineffective notions, is just such an excellency, as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best the nightingale shall excel him, and it is of no use to that end, which God designed him in the first intentions of creation.

In pursuance of this consideration, I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of theology which is wholly practical; that which makes us wiser, therefore, because it makes us better. And truly, my lord, it is enough to weary the spirit of a disputer, that he shall argue till he hath lost his voice, and his time, and sometimes the question too; and yet no man shall be of his mind more than was before. How few turn Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Roman catholics, from the religion either of their country or interest! Possibly two or three weak or interested, fantastic and easy, prejudicate and effeminate understandings, pass from church to church, upon grounds as weak as those, for which formerly they did assent; and the same arguments are good or bad, as exterior accidents or interior appetites shall determine. I deny not but, for great causes, some opinions are to be quitted: but when I consider how few do forsake any, and when any do, oftentimes they choose the wrong side, and they that take the righter, do it so by contingency, and the advantage also is so little, I believe that the triumphant persons have but small reason to please themselves in gaining proselytes, since their purchase is so small, and as inconsiderable to their triumph, as it is unprofitable to them who change for the worse or for the better upon unworthy motives. In all this there is nothing certain, nothing noble. But he that follows the work of God, that is, labours to gain souls, not to a sect and a subdivision, but to the christian religion, that is, to the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, hath a promise to be assisted and rewarded: and all those that go to heaven, are the purchase of such undertakings, the fruit of such culture and labours; for it is only a holy life that lands us there.

And now, my lord, I have told you my reasons, I shall not be ashamed to say, that I am weary and toiled with rowing up and down in the seas of questions, which the interests of Christendom have commenced, and in many propositions, of which I am heartily persuaded I am not certain that I am not deceived; and I find that men are most confident of those articles, which they can so little prove, that they never made questions of them: but I am most certain, that by living in the religion and fear of God, in obedience to the king, in the charities and duties of communion with my spiritual guides, in justice and love with all the world in their several proportions, I shall not fail of that end, which is perfective of human nature, and which will never be obtained by disputing.

Here, therefore, when I had fixed my thoughts, upon sad apprehensions that God was removing our candlestick, (for why should he not, when men themselves put the light out, and pull the stars from their orbs, so hastening the day of God's judgment?) I was desirous to put a portion of the holy fire into a repository, which might help to re-enkindle the incense, when it shall please God religion shall return, and all his servants sing, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," with a voice of eucharist.

But now, my lord, although the results and issues of my retirements and study do naturally run towards you, and carry no excuse for their forwardness, but the confidence that your goodness rejects no emanation of a great affection; yet in this address I am apt to promise to myself a fair interpretation, because I bring you an instrument and auxiliaries to that devotion, whereby we believe you are dear to God, and know that you are to good men. And if these little sparks of holy fire, which I have heaped together, do not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertain a thought, to actuate a passion, to employ and hallow a fancy, and put the body of your piety into fermentation, by presenting you with the circumstances and parts of such meditations, which are symbolical to those of your daily office, and which are the *passe-temps* of your severest hours. My lord, I am not so vain to think, that in the matter of devotion, and the rules of justice and religion, (which is the business of our life,) I can add any thing to your heap of excellent things: but I have known and felt comfort by reading, or hearing from other persons, what I knew myself; and it was unactive upon my spirit, till it was made vigorous and effective from without. And in this sense I thought I might not be useless and impertinent.

My lord, I designed to be instrumental to the salvation of all persons, that shall read my book: but unless (because souls are equal in their substance, and equally redeemed) we are obliged to wish the salvation of all men, with the greatest, that is, with equal desires, I did intend, in the highest manner I could, to express how much I am to pay to you, by doing the offices of that duty, which, although you less need, yet I was most bound to pay, even the duties and charities of religion; having this design, that when posterity (for certainly they will learn to distinguish things and persons) shall see your honoured name employed to separate and rescue these papers from contempt, they may with the more confidence expect in them something fit to be offered to such a personage. My lord, I have my end, if I serve God and you, and the needs and interests of souls; but shall think my return full of reward, if you shall give me pardon, and put me into your litanies, and account me in the number of your relatives and servants; for indeed, my lord, I am most heartily,

Your Lordship's most affectionate

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

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THE PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN religion hath so many exterior advantages to its reputation and advancement, from the Author and from the ministers, from the Fountain of its origination and the channels of conveyance, (God being the Author, the Word incarnate being the great Doctor and Preacher of it, his life and death being its consignation, the Holy Spirit being the great argument and demonstration of it, and the apostles the organs and conduits of its dissemination,) that it were glorious beyond all opposition and disparagement, though we should not consider the excellency of its matter, and the certainty of its probation, and the efficacy of its power, and the perfection and rare accomplishment of its design. But I consider that christianity is therefore very little understood, because it is reproached upon that pretence, which its very being and design does infinitely confute. It is esteemed to be a religion contrary in its principles or in its precepts to that wisdom,[a] whereby the world is governed, and commonwealths increase, and greatness is acquired, and kings go to war, and our ends of interest are served and promoted; and that it is an institution so wholly in order to another world, that it does not at all communicate with this, neither in its end nor in its discourses, neither in the policy nor in the philosophy; and therefore, as the doctrine of the cross was entertained at first in scorn by the Greeks, in offence and indignation by the Jews, so is the whole system and collective body of christian philosophy esteemed imprudent by the politics of the world, and flat and irrational by some men of excellent wit and sublime discourse; who, because the permissions and dictates of natural, true, and essential reason, are at no hand to be contradicted by any superinduced discipline, think that whatsoever seems contrary to their reason is also violent to our nature, and offers indeed a good to us, but by ways unnatural and unreasonable. And I think they are very great strangers to the present affairs and persuasions of the world, who know not that christianity is very much undervalued upon this principle, men insensibly becoming unchristian, because they are persuaded, that much of the greatness of the world is contradicted by the religion. But certainly no mistake can be greater; for the holy Jesus by his doctrine did instruct the understandings of men, made their appetites more obedient, their reason better principled, and argumentative with less deception, their wills apter for noble choices, their governments more prudent, their present felicities greater, their hopes more excellent, and that duration, which was intended to them by their Creator, he made manifest to be a state of glory: and all this was to be done and obtained respectively by the ways of reason and nature, such as God gave to man then, when at first he designed him to a noble and an immortal condition; the christian law being, for the substance of it, nothing but the restitution[b] and perfection of the law of nature. And this I shall represent in all the parts of its natural progression; and I intend it not only as a preface to the following books, but for an introduction and an invitation to the whole religion.

2. For God, when he made the first emanations of his eternal being, and created man as the end of all his productions here below, designed him to an end such as himself was pleased to choose for him, and gave him abilities proportionable to attain that end. God gave man a reasonable and intelligent nature;[c] and to this noble nature he designed as noble an end: he intended man should live well and happily, in proportion to his appetites, and in the reasonable doing and enjoying those good things, which God made him naturally to desire. For, since God gave him proper and peculiar appetites

[a] ————Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices, miseros fuge. Sidera terrâ
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto.
Sceptrorum vis tota perit, si pendere justa
Incipit; evertitque arces respectus honesti.
Libertas scelerum est, quæ regna invisa tuetur,
Sublatusque modus gladiis. Facere omnia sævè
Non impunè licet, nisi dum facis. Exeat aulâ
Qui volet esse pius: virtus et summa potestas
Non coëunt. Semper metuet quem sæva pudebunt.
LUCAN. l. viii. 486.

[b] Οὐκ Ἰουδαϊσμὸς, οὐχ ἁιρεσίς τις ἑτέρα, (scil. ante diluvium) ἀλλ' ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἡ νῦν πίστις ἐμπολιτευομένη ἐν τῇ ἄρτι ἁγίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς οὐσα, καὶ ὕστερον πάλιν ἀποκαλυφθεῖσα.—EPIPH. Panar. l. i. tom. i. num. 5.

Nihil autem magis congruit cum hominis naturâ quàm Christi philosophia, quæ penè nihil aliud agit quàm ut naturam collapsam suæ restituat innocentiæ. —ERASM. in xi. cap. Matt.

[c] Ratio Dei Deus est humanis rebus consulens, quæ causa est hominibus benè beatèque vivendi, si non concessum sibi munus à summo Deo negligant.—CHALCID. ad Timæ. 16.

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with proportion to their own objects, and gave him reason and abilities not only to perceive the sapidness and relish of those objects, but also to make reflex acts upon such perceptions, and to perceive that he did perceive, which was a rare instrument of pleasure and pain respectively; it is but reasonable to think, that God, who created him in mercy, did not only proportion a being to his nature, but did also provide satisfaction for all those appetites and desires, which himself had created and put into him. For, if he had not, then the being of a man had been nothing but a state of perpetual affliction, and the creation of men had been the greatest unmercifulness in the world; disproportionate objects being mere instances of affliction, and those unsatisfied appetites nothing else but instruments of torment.

3. Therefore, that this intendment of God and nature should be affected, that is, that man should become happy, it is naturally necessary that all his regular appetites should have an object appointed them, in the fruition of which felicity must consist: because nothing is felicity but when what was reasonably or orderly desired is possessed; for the having what is not desired, or the wanting of what we desired, or the desiring what we should not, are the several constituent parts of infelicity; and it can have no other constitution.

4. Now the first appetite man had in order to his great end was, to be as perfect as he could, that is, to be as like the best thing he knew as his nature and condition would permit.[d] And although by Adam's fancy and affection to his wife, and by God's appointing fruit for him, we see the lower appetites were first provided for; yet the first appetite which man had, as he distinguishes from lower creatures, was to be like God; (for by that the devil tempted him;) and in order to that he had naturally sufficient instruments and abilities. For although by being abused with the devil's sophistry he chose an incompetent instrument, yet because it is naturally certain, that love is the greatest assimilation of the object and the faculty, Adam by loving God might very well approach nearer him according as he could. And it was natural to Adam to love God, who was his Father, his Creator, the fountain of all good to him, and of excellency in himself; and whatsoever is understood to be such, it is as natural for us to love, and we do it for the same reasons, for which we love any thing else; and we cannot love for any other reason, but for one or both these in their proportion apprehended.

5. But because God is not only excellent and good, but, by being supreme Lord, hath power to give us what laws he pleases, obedience to his laws therefore becomes naturally, but consequently, necessary, when God decrees them; because he does make himself an enemy to all rebels and disobedient sons, by affixing penalties to the transgressors: and therefore disobedience is naturally inconsistent, not only with love to ourselves, because it brings afflictions upon us, but with love to our supreme Lawgiver: it is contrary to the natural love we bear to God so understood, because it makes him our enemy, whom naturally and reasonably we cannot but love; and therefore also opposite to the first appetite of man, which is to be like God, in order to which we have naturally no instrument but love, and the consequents of love.

6. And this is not at all to be contradicted by a pretence that a man does not naturally know there is a God; because by the same instrument by which we know that the world began, or that there was a first man, by the same we know that there is a God, and that he also knew it too, and conversed with that God, and received laws from him. For if we discourse of man, and the law of nature, and the first appetites, and the first reasons abstractedly, and in their own complexions, and without all their relations and provisions, we discourse jejunely, and falsely, and unprofitably. For as man did not come by chance, nor by himself, but from the universal Cause, so we know that this universal Cause did do all that was necessary for him, in order to the end he appointed him. And therefore to begin the history of a man's reason, and the philosophy of his nature, it is not necessary for us to place him there, where without the consideration of a God,[e] or society, or law, or order, he is to be placed, that is, in the state of a thing rather than a person; but God by revelations and scriptures having helped us with propositions and parts of story relating man's first and real condition, from thence we can take the surest account, and make the most perfect derivation of propositions.

7. From this first appetite of man to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love, descend all the first obligations of religion; in which there are some parts more immediately and naturally expressive, others by superinduction and positive command. Natural religion I call such actions, which either are proper to the nature of the thing we worship, (such as are giving praises to him, and speaking excellent things of him, and praying to him for such things as we need, and a readiness to obey him in whatsoever he commands,) or else such as are expressions proportionate to our natures that make them; that is, giving to God the best things we have, and by which we can declare our esteem of his honour and excellency; assigning some portion of our time, of our estate, the labours of our persons, the increase of our store, first-fruits, sacrifices, oblations, and tithes;[f] which therefore God rewards, because he hath allowed to our natures no other

[d] Ἐν τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ βέλτιον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχεται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον. ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον.—Arist. de Cœlo.

[e] Οὐ γὰρ ἐστιν εὑρεῖν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄλλης ἀρχήν, οὐδὲ ἄλλην γένεσιν, ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως· ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ δεῖ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀρχὴν ἔχειν, εἰ μέλλομέν τι ἐρεῖν περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν.—Chrysip. de Diis, 3.

[f] Σπένδειν, καὶ θύειν, καὶ ἀπάρχεσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, ἑκάστοις προσήκει καθαρῶς, καὶ μὴ ἐπισεσυρμένως, μηδὲ ἀμελῶς, μηδὲ γλισχρῶς, μηδὲ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν.—Epict. c. xxxviii.

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instruments of doing him honour, but by giving to him in some manner, which we believe honourable and apt, the best things we have.

8. The next appetite a man hath is to beget one like himself, God having implanted that appetite into man for the propagation of mankind, and given it as his first blessing and permission: "It is not good for man to be alone;" and "Increase and multiply." And Artemidorus[g] had something of this doctrine, when he reckons these two laws of nature, "Deum colere, mulieribus vinci," "to worship God, and to be overcome by women," in proportion to his two first appetites of nature, "to be like God, and to have another like himself." This appetite God only made regular by his first provisions of satisfaction. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrows, for the instrument of multiplication; and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more: which we do not only know by an after revelation, the holy Jesus having declared it to have been God's purpose; but Adam himself understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride.[h] And although there were permissions afterward of polygamy, yet there might have been a greater pretence of necessity at first, because of enlarging and multiplying fountains rather than channels; and three or four at first would have enlarged mankind by greater proportion than many more afterwards; little distances near the centre make greater and larger figures, than when they part near the fringes of the circle; and therefore those after permissions were to avoid a greater evil, not a hallowing of the license, but a reproach of their infirmity. And certainly the multiplication of wives is contrariant to that design of love and endearment, which God intended at first between man and wife.

——— Connubia mille
Non illis generis nexus, non pignora curæ,
Sed numero languet pietas:[i] ———

And amongst them that have many wives,[k] the relation and necessitude is trifling and loose, and they are all equally contemptible; because the mind entertains no loves or union where the object is multiplied, and the act unfixed and distracted. So that this having a great commodity in order to man's great end, that is, of living well and happily, seems to be intended by God in the nature of things and instruments natural and reasonable towards man's end; and therefore to be a law, if not natural, yet at least positive and superinduced at first, in order to man's proper end. However, by the provision which God made for satisfaction of this appetite of nature, all those actions, which deflect and err from the order of this end, are unnatural and inordinate, and not permitted by the concession of God, nor the order of the thing; but such actions only, which naturally produce the end of this provision and satisfaction, are natural, regular, and good.

9. But by this means man grew into a society and a family, and having productions of his own kind, which he naturally desired, and therefore loved, he was consequently obliged to assist them in order to their end, that they might become like him, that is, perfect men, and brought up to the same state: and they also by being at first impotent, and for ever after beneficiaries[l] and obliged persons, are for the present subject to their parents, and for ever after bound to duty; because there is nothing which they can do, that can directly produce so great a benefit to the parents as they have to the children. From hence naturally descend all those mutual obligations between parents and children, which are instruments of protection and benefit on the one side, and duty and obedience on the other; and all these to be expressed according as either of their necessities shall require, or any stipulation or contract shall appoint, or shall be superinduced by any positive laws of God or man.

10. In natural descent of the generations of man this one first family was multiplied so much, that for conveniency they were forced to divide their dwellings; and this they did by families especially, the great father being the major-domo to all his minors. And this division of dwellings, although it kept the same form and power in the several families, which were in the original, yet it introduced some new necessities, which, although they varied in the instance, yet were to be determined by such instruments of reason, which were given to us at first upon foresight of the public necessities of the world. And when the families came to be divided, that their common parent being extinct, no master of a family had power over another master; the rights of such men and their natural power became equal, because there was nothing to distinguish them, and because they might do equal injury, and invade each other's possessions, and disturb their peace, and surprise their liberty. And so also was their power of doing benefit equal, though not the same in kind. But God, who made man a sociable creature, because he knew it was "not good for him to be alone," so dispensed the abilities and possibilities of doing good, that in something or other every man might need or be benefited by every man.[m] Therefore, that they might pursue the end of nature, and their own appetites of living well and happily, they were forced to consent to such contracts, which might secure and supply to every one those good things, without which he could not live happily, Both the appetites, the irascible and the concupiscible, fear of evil and desire of benefit, were the suf-

[g] De Somn. Sign.
[h] Gen. ii. 24.
[i] Claudian Bell. Gildon. 441.
[k] Sallust. Jugurth. c. lxxx.

——— οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν,
Δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ' ἕν' ἡνίας ἔχειν·
Ἀλλ' εἰς μίαν βλέποντες ἐυναίαν κύπριν
Στέργουσιν, ὅστις μὴ κακῶς οἰκεῖν θέλει.
EURIP. Androm. 179.

[l] Nihil enim est liberis proprium, quod non parentum sit priùs, qui aut de suo dederant, aut acquirendi præbuerant causas.—PHILO.
[m] Animus inveniet liberalitatis materiam, etiam inter angustias paupertatis.—SENEC. de Benefic. c. i.

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ficient endearments of contracts, of societies, and republics. And upon this stock were decreed and hallowed all those propositions, without which bodies politic and societies of men cannot be happy.[n] And in the transaction of these, many accidents daily happening, it grew still reasonable, that is, necessary to the end of living happily, that all those after obligations should be observed with the proportion of the same faith and endearment which bound the first contracts. For though the natural law be always the same, yet some parts of it are primely necessary, others by supposition and accident; and both are of the same necessity, that is, equally necessary in the several cases. Thus, to obey a king is as necessary and naturally reasonable as to obey a father, that is, supposing there be a king, as it is certain naturally a man cannot be, but a father must be supposed. If it be made necessary that I promise, it is also necessary that I perform it: for else I shall return to that inconvenience, which I sought to avoid when I made the promise; and though the instance be very far removed from the first necessities and accidents of our prime being and production, yet the reason still pursues us, and natural reason reaches up to the very last minutes, and orders the most remote particulars of our well-being.

11. Thus, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill, are very reasonable prosecutions of the great end of nature, of living well and happily; but when a man is said to steal, when to be a murderer, when to be incestuous, the natural law doth not teach in all cases; but when the superinduced constitution hath determined the particular law, by natural reason we are obliged to observe it: because, though the civil power makes the instance, and determines the particular; yet right reason makes the sanction, and passes the obligation. The law of nature makes the major proposition; but the civil constitution, or any superinduced law, makes the assumption in a practical syllogism. To kill is not murder; but to kill such persons, whom I ought not. It was not murder, among the Jews, to kill a manslayer, before he entered a city of refuge; to kill the same man after his entry, was. Among the Romans,[o] to kill an adulteress or a ravisher in the act, was lawful; with us, it is murder. Murder, and incest, and theft, always were unlawful; but the same actions were not always the same crimes. And it is just with these, as with disobedience, which was ever criminal; but the same thing was not estimated to be disobedience; nor indeed could any thing be so, till the sanction of a superior had given the instance of obedience. So for theft: to catch fish in rivers, or deer, or pigeons, when they were esteemed feræ naturæ, of a wild condition, and so primò occupantis, was lawful; just as to take or kill badgers or foxes, and beavers and lions: but when the laws had appropriated rivers, and divided shores, and imparked deer, and housed pigeons, it became theft to take them without leave. To despoil the Egyptians was not theft, when God, who is the Lord of all possessions, had bidden the Israelites; but to do so now, were the breach of the natural law, and of a divine commandment. For the natural law, I said, is eternal in the sanction, but variable in the instance and the expression. And indeed the laws of nature are very few; they were but two at first, and but two at last, when the great change was made from families to kingdoms. The first is, to do duty to God; the second is, to do to ourselves and our neighbours, that is, to our neighbours as to ourselves, all those actions, which naturally, reasonably, or by institution or emergent necessity, are in order to a happy life. Our blessed Saviour reduces all the law to these two: 1. Love the Lord with all thy heart: 2. Love thy neighbour as thyself. In which I observe, in verification of my former discourse,[p] that love is the first natural bond of duty to God, so also it is to our neighbour. And therefore all intercourse with our neighbour was founded in, and derived from, the two greatest endearments of love in the world. A man came to have a neighbour, by being a husband and a father.

12. So that still there are but two great natural laws, binding us in our relations to God and man; we remaining essentially, and, by the very design of creation, obliged to God in all, and to our neighbours in the proportions of equality, as thyself; that is, that he be permitted and promoted, in the order to his living well and happily, as thou art; for love being there not an affection, but the duty that results from the first natural bands of love, which began neighbourhood, signifies justice, equality, and such reasonable proceedings, which are in order to our common end of a happy life; and is the same with that other, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you to them;" and that is certainly the greatest and most effective love; because it best promotes that excellent end, which God designed for our natural perfection. All other particulars are but prosecutions of these two, that is, of the order of nature: save only that there is a third law, which is a part of love too; it is self-love; and therefore is rather supposed, than at the first expressed, because a man is reasonably to be presumed to have in him a sufficient stock of self-love, to serve the ends of his nature and creation; and that is, that man demean and use his own body in that decorum, which is most orderly and proportionate to his perfective end of a happy life; which christian religion calls sobriety; and it is a prohibition of those uncharitable, self-destroying sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and inordinate and unreasonable manners of lust, destructive of nature's intendments, or at least no ways promoting them. For it is naturally lawful to satisfy any of these desires, when the desire does not carry the satisfaction beyond the design of nature, that is, to the violation of health, or that happy living, which consists in observing those contracts, which mankind thought necessary to be made, in order to the same great end; unless where

[n] Commoda præterea patriæ tibi prima putare.—Lucilius.

[o] A. Gellius, l. x. 23.

[p] Num. 4.

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God hath superinduced a restraint, making an instance of sobriety to become an act of religion, or to pass into an expression of duty to him: but then it is not a natural, but a religious sobriety, and may be instanced in fasting or abstinence from some kinds of meat, or some times or manners of conjugation. These are the three natural laws, described in the christian doctrine; that we live, 1. godly; 2. soberly; 3. righteously. And the particulars of the first are ordinarily to be determined by God immediately, or his vicegerents, and by reason observing and complying with the accidents of the world, and dispositions of things and persons; the second, by the natural order of nature, by sense, and by experience; and the third, by human contracts and civil laws.

13. The result of the preceding discourse is this. Man, who was designed by God to a happy life, was fitted with sufficient means to attain that end, so that he might, if he would, be happy; but he was a free agent, and so might choose. And it is possible, that man may fail of his end, and be made miserable, by God, by himself, or by his neighbour; or, by the same persons, he may be made happy in the same proportions, as they relate to him. If God be angry or disobeyed, he becomes our enemy, and so we fail: if our neighbour be injured or impeded in the direct order to his happy living, he hath equal right against us, as we against him, and so we fail that way: and if I be intemperate, I grow sick and worsted in some faculty, and I so am unhappy in myself. But if I obey God, and do right to my neighbour, and confine myself within the order and design of nature; I am secured in all ends of blessing, in which I can be assisted by these three, that is, by all my relatives; there being no end of man designed by God in order to his happiness, to which these are not proper and sufficient instruments. Man can have no other relations, no other discourses, no other regular appetites, but what are served and satisfied by religion, by sobriety, and by justice. There is nothing, whereby we can relate to any person, who can hurt us, or do us benefit, but is provided for in these three. These, therefore, are all; and these are sufficient.

14. But now it is to be inquired, how these become laws; obliging us to sin, if we transgress, even before any positive law of God be superinduced: for else, how can it be a natural law, that is, a law obliging all nations and all persons, even such who have had no intercourse with God by way of special revelation, and have lost all memory of tradition? For either such persons, whatsoever they do, shall obtain that end, which God designed for them in their nature, that is, a happy life according to the duration of an immortal nature; or else they shall perish for prevaricating of these laws. And yet, if they were no laws to them, nor decreed and made sacred by sanction, promulgation, and appendant penalties, they could not so oblige them, as to become the rule of virtue or vice.

15. When God gave us natural reason, that is, sufficient ability to do all that should be necessary to live well and happily, he also knew, that some appetites might be irregular, just as some stomachs would be sick, and some eyes blind; and a man, being a voluntary agent, might choose an ill with as little reason, as the angels of darkness did, that is, they might do unreasonably, because they would do so; and then a man's understanding should serve him but as an instrument of mischief, and his will carry him on to it with a blind and impotent desire; and then the beauteous order of creatures would be discomposed by unreasonable, and unconsidering, or evil persons. And therefore it was most necessary, that man should have his appetites confined within the designs of nature, and the order to his end; for a will, without the restraint of a superior power or a perfect understanding, is like a knife in a child's hand, as apt for mischief as for use. Therefore it pleased God to bind man, by the signature of laws, to observe those great natural reasons, without which man could not arrive at the great end of God's designing; that is, he could not live well and happily. God, therefore, made it the first law to love him; and, which is all one, to worship him, to speak honour of him, and to express it in all our ways, the chief whereof is obedience. And this we find in the instance of that positive precept, which God gave to Adam, and which was nothing but a particular of the great general. But in this there is little scruple, because it is not imaginable, that God would, in any period of time, not take care, that himself be honoured, his glory being the very end why he made man; and therefore it must be certain, that this did, at the very first, pass into a law.

16. But concerning this and other things, which are usually called natural laws, I consider, that the things themselves were such, that the doing them was therefore declared to be a law, because the not doing them did certainly bring a punishment proportionable to the crime, that is, 1. a just deficiency from the end of creation, from a good and happy life: 2. and also a punishment of a guilty conscience: which I do not understand to be a fear of hell, or of any supervening penalty, unless the conscience be accidentally instructed into such fears by experience or revelation; but it is a "malum in genere rationis," a disease or evil of the reasonable faculty; that, as there is a rare content in the discourse of reason, there is a satisfaction, an acquiescency, like that of creatures in their proper place, and definite actions, and competent perfections; so, in prevaricating the natural law, there is a dissatisfaction, a disease, a removing out of the place, an unquietness of spirit, even when there is no monitor or observer. "Adeò facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustrà præstantissimus [Plato] sapientiæ firmare solitus est, si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, posse aspici laniatus et ictus, quando ut corpora verberibus, ità sævitiâ, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur," said Tacitus[q] out of Plato,[r] whose words are; Ἀλλὰ πολλάκις τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἐπιλαβόμενος, ἢ ἄλλου ὁτιοῦν βασι-

[q] Annal. vi. 6.

[r] In Gorgia, § 61.

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λέως ἢ δυνάστου, κατεῖδεν οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς ὂν τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ διαμεμαστιγωμένην καὶ οὐλῶν μεστὴν, ὑπὸ ἐπιορκιῶν καὶ ἀδικίας. It is naturally certain, that the cruelty of tyrants torments themselves, and is a hook in their nostrils, and a scourge to their spirit;[s] and the pungency of forbidden lust is truly a thorn in the flesh, full of anguish and secret vexation.

> Quid, demens, manifesta negas? En pectus inustæ
> Deformant maculæ, vitiisque inolevit imago,

said Claudian[t] of Rufinus. And it is certain to us, and verified by the experience and observation of all wise nations, though not naturally demonstrable, that this secret punishment is sharpened and promoted in degrees by the hand of Heaven, the finger of the same hand, that writ the law in our understandings.

17. But the prevarications of the natural law have also their portion of a special punishment, besides the scourge of an unquiet spirit. The man that disturbs his neighbour's rest, meets with disturbances himself: and since I have naturally no more power over my neighbour than he hath over me, (unless he descended naturally from me,) he hath an equal privilege to defend himself, and to secure his quiet by disturbing the order of my happy living, as I do his. And this equal permission is certainly so great a sanction and signature of the law of justice, that, in the just proportion of my receding from the reasonable prosecution of my end, in the same proportion and degree my own infelicity is become certain; and this in several degrees up to the loss of all, that is, of life itself: for where no farther duration or differing state is known, there death is ordinarily esteemed the greatest infelicity; where something beyond it is known, there also it is known, that such prevarication makes that farther duration to be unhappy. So that an affront is naturally punished by an affront, the loss of a tooth with the loss of a tooth, of an eye with an eye, the violent taking away of another man's goods by the losing my own. For I am liable to as great an evil as I infer, and naturally he is not unjust that inflicts it. And he that is drunk is a fool or a madman for the time; and that is his punishment, and declares the law and the sin: and so in proportions to the transgressions of sobriety. But when the first of the natural laws is violated, that is, God is disobeyed or dishonoured, or when the greatest of natural evils is done to our neighbour, then death became the penalty: to the first, in the first period of the world; to the second, at the restitution of the world, that is, at the beginning of the second period. He that did attempt to kill, from the beginning of ages might have been resisted and killed, if the assaulted could not else be safe; but he that killed actually, as Cain did, could not be killed himself, till the law was made in Noah's time; because there was no person living that had equal power on him, and had been naturally injured. While the thing was doing, the assailant and the assailed had equal power; but when it was done, and one was killed, he that had the power or right of killing his murderer, is now dead, and his power is extinguished with the man. But after the flood, the power was put into the hand of some trusted person, who was to take the forfeiture. And thus, I conceive, these natural reasons, in order to their proper end, became laws, and bound fast by the band of annexed and consequent penalties. "Metum prorsus et noxiam conscientiæ pro fœdere haberi," said Tacitus;[u] and that fully explains my sense.

18. And thus death was brought into the world; not by every prevarication of any of the laws, by any instance of unreasonableness: for in proportion to the evil of the action would be the evil of the suffering, which in all cases would not arrive at death; as every injury, every intemperance, should not have been capital. But some things were made evil by a superinduced prohibition, as eating one kind of fruit; some things were evil by inordination: the first was morally evil, the second was evil naturally. Now the first sort brought in death by a prime sanction; the second by degrees and variety of accident. For every disobedience and transgression of that law, which God made as the instance of our doing him honour and obedience, is an integral violation of all the band between him and us; it does not grow in degrees, according to the instance and subject matter; for it is as great a disobedience to eat, when he hath forbidden us, as to offer to climb to heaven with an ambitious tower. And therefore it is but reasonable for us to fear, and just in him to make us at once to suffer death, which is the greatest of natural evils, for disobeying him: to which death we may arrive by degrees, in doing actions against the reasonableness of sobriety and justice, but cannot arrive by degrees of disobedience to God, or irreligion; because every such act deserves the worst of things, but the other naturally deserves no greater evil than the proportion of their own inordination, till God, by a superinduced law, hath made them also to become acts of disobedience as well as inordination, that is, morally evil, as well as naturally; for, "by the law," saith St. Paul, "sin became exceeding sinful,"[w] that is, had a new degree of obliquity added to it. But this was not at first. For therefore saith St. Paul, "Before," or until "the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law:"[x] meaning, that those sins, which were forbidden by Moses's law, were actually in the manners of men and the customs of the world; but they were not imputed, that is, to such personal punishments and consequent evils, which afterwards those sins did introduce; because those sins, which were only evil by inordination, and discomposure of the order of man's end of living happily, were made unlawful upon no other stock, but that God would have man

[s] Lucian. in Catapl. Rhadamanthus, Ὁπόσα ἂν τις ὑμῶν πονηρὰ ἐργάσηται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει.—Bipont. t. iii. p. 205.

[t] Claudian de Rufin. lib. ii. 504.

[u] Ann. vi. 4.

[w] Rom. vii. 13.

[x] Rom. v. 13.

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to live happily; and therefore gave him reason, to effect that end; and if a man became unreasonable, and did things contrary to his end, it was impossible for him to be happy; that is, he should be miserable in proportion. But in that degree and manner of evil they were imputed; and that was sanction enough to raise natural reason up to the constitution of a law.

19. Thirdly, the law of nature, being thus decreed and made obligatory, was a sufficient instrument of making man happy, that is, in producing the end of his creation. But as Adam had evil discourses and irregular appetites before he fell, (for they made him fall,) and as the angels, who had no original sin, yet they chose evil at the first, when it was wholly arbitrary in them to do so or otherwise; so did man. "God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions." Some men were ambitious, and by incompetent means would make their brethren to be their servants; some were covetous, and would usurp that, which, by an earlier distinction, had passed into private possession: and then they made new principles, and new discourses, such which were reasonable in order to their private indirect ends, but not to the public benefit, and therefore would prove unreasonable and mischievous to themselves at last.

20. And when once they broke the order of creation, it is easy to understand, by what necessities of consequence they ran into many sins and irrational proceedings.[y] Ælian tells of a nation, who had a law binding them to beat their parents to death with clubs, when they lived to a decrepit and unprofitable age. The Persian Magi mingled with their mothers and all their nearest relatives. And by a law of the Venetians, says Bodinus,[z] a son in banishment was redeemed from the sentence, if he killed his banished father. And in Homer's time, there were a sort of pirates,[a] who professed robbing, and did account it honourable. But the great prevarications of the laws of nature were in the first commandment; when the tradition concerning God was derived by a long line, and there were no visible remonstrances of an extraordinary power, they were quickly brought to believe, that he whom they saw not, was not at all, especially being prompted to it by pride, tyranny, and a loose, imperious spirit.[b] Others fell to low opinions concerning God, and made such as they list of their own; and they were like to be strange gods, which were of man's making. When man, either maliciously or carelessly, became unreasonable in the things that concerned God, God was pleased to "give him over to a reprobate mind,"[c] that is, an unreasonable understanding, and false principles concerning himself and his neighbour, that his sin against the natural law might become its own punishment, by discomposing his natural happiness. Atheism and idolatry brought in all unnatural lusts, and many unreasonable injustices. And this we learn from St. Paul: "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;"[d] that is, incongruities towards the end of their creation; and so they became "full of unrighteousness, lust, covetousness, malice, envy, strife, and murder, disobedient to parents, breakers of covenants, unnatural in their affections," and in their passions: and all this was the consequent of breaking the first natural law. "They changed the truth of God into a lie: for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections."[e]

21. Now God, who takes more care for the good of man, than man does for his own, did not only imprint these laws in the hearts and understandings of man, but did also take care to make this light shine clear enough to walk by, by adopting some instances of the natural laws into religion. Thus the law against murder became a part of religion in the time of Noah; and some other things were then added concerning worshipping God, against idolatry, and against unnatural and impure mixtures. Sometimes God superadded judgments, as to the 23,000 Israelites for fornication. For although these punishments were not threatened to the crime in the sanction and expression of any definite law, and it could not naturally arrive to it by its inordination; yet it was as agreeable to the Divine justice to inflict it, as to inflict the pains of hell upon evil livers, who yet had not any revelation of such intolerable danger: for it was sufficient, that God had made such crimes to be against their very nature; and they who will do violence to their nature, to do themselves hurt, and to displease God, deserve to lose the title to all those good things, which God was pleased to design for man's final condition. And because it grew habitual, customary, and of innocent reputation, it pleased God to call this precept out of the darkness, whither their evil customs and false discourses had put it; and by such an extraregular, but very signal punishment, to remind them, that the natural permissions of concubinate were only confined to the ends of mankind, and were hallowed only by the faith and the design of marriage. And this was signified by St. Paul, in these words: "They that sin without the law, shall also perish without the law;"[f] that is, by such judgments, which God hath inflicted on evil livers in several periods of the world, irregularly indeed, not signified in kind, but yet sent into the world with designs of a great mercy; that the ignorances, and prevarications, and partial abolitions of the natural law, might be cured and restored, and by the dispersion of prejudices the state of natural reason be redintegrate.

22. Whatsoever was besides this, was accidental and emergent; such as were the discourses of wise men, which God raised up in several countries and

[y] Τινὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐξηγρίωται, dixit Porphyrius.
[z] De Rep. l. i. c. 4.
[a] Οὐκ ἄδοξον ἦν παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸ λῃστεύειν, ἀλλ' ἔνδοξον.—Scholiast. in Hom. Odyss. τ'. Vide etiam A. Gel. l. xi. c. 18.
[b] Ὅσοι ἀπὸ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἐμπεφορημένοι, καὶ ὑπὸ φαύλης ἀνατροφῆς καὶ ἐθῶν φαύλων καὶ νόμων πονηρῶν διαφθαρέντες τὰς φυσικὰς ἐννοίας ἀπώλεσαν.—Just. Mart. Dial. Tryph.
[c] Rom. i. 25, 26, &c.
[d] Ver. 28, &c.
[e] Ver. 25, 26.
[f] Rom. ii. 12.

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ages, as Job, and Eliphaz, and Bildad, and those of the families of the patriarchs dispersed into several countries; and constant tradition in some noble and more eminent descents. And yet all this was so little and imperfect, not in itself, but in respect of the thick cloud man had drawn before his understanding, that darkness covered the face of the earth in a great proportion. Almost all the world were idolaters; and when they had broken the first of the natural laws, the breach of the other was not only naturally consequent, but also, by Divine judgment, it descended infallibly. And yet God, pitying mankind, did not only still continue the former remedies, and added blessings, "giving them fruitful seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladness," so leaving the nations without excuse; but also made a very noble change in the world: for having chosen an excellent family, the fathers of which lived exactly according to the natural law, and with observation of those few superadded precepts, in which God did specificate their prime duty; and having swelled that family to a great nation, and given them possession of an excellent land, which God took from seven nations, because they were egregious violators of the natural law; he was pleased to make a very great restitution and declaration of the natural law, in many instances of religion and justice, which he framed into positive precepts, and adopted them into the family of the first original instances, making them as necessary in the particulars, as they were in the primary obligation: but the instances were such, whereof some did relate only to the present constitution of the commonwealth; others to such universal contracts, which obliged all the world, by reason of the equal necessity of all mankind, to admit them. And these himself writ on tables of stone, and dressed up their nation in a body politic by an excellent system of politic laws, and adorned it with a rare religion, and left this nation as a piece of leaven in a mass of dough, not only to do honour to God, and happiness to themselves, by those instruments, which he had now very much explicated, but also to transmit the same reasonable propositions into other nations: and he therefore multiplied them to a great necessity of a dispersion, that they might serve the ends of God and of the natural law, by their ambulatory life and their numerous disseminations. And this was it which St. Paul affirms, "The law was added because of transgression:"[s] meaning, that because men did transgress the natural, God brought Moses's law into the world, to be as a strand to the inundation of impiety. And thus the world stood, till the fulness of time was come: for so we are taught by the apostle, "The law was added because of transgression;" but the date of this was to expire at a certain period, it was added to serve but "till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made."

23. For, because Moses's law was but an imperfect explication of the natural; there being divers parts of the three laws of nature not at all explicated by that covenant, not the religion of prayers, not the reasonableness of temperance and sobriety in opinion and diet; and in the more noble instances of humanity and doing benefit, it was so short, that, as St. Paul says, "The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect;" and, which was most of all considerable, it was confined to a nation; and the other parts of mankind had made so little use of the records of that nation, that all the world was placed "in darkness, and sate in the shadow of death:" therefore it was, that in great mercy God sent his Son, "a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel:" to instruct those, and consummate these; that the imperfection of the one, and the mere darkness of the other, might be illustrated by the Sun of righteousness. And this was by restoring the light of nature, which they, by evil customs, and false principles, and evil laws, had obscured; by restoring man to the liberty of his spirit, by freeing him from the slavery of sin, under which they were so lost and oppressed, that all their discourses and conclusions, some of their moral philosophy, and all their habitual practices, were but servants of sin, and made to co-operate to that end, not which God intended as perfective of human nature, but which the devil and vicious persons superinduced, to serve little ends and irregular, and to destroy the greater.

24. For certain it is, christianity is nothing else but the most perfect design that ever was, to make a man happy in his whole capacity: and as the law was to the Jews, so was philosophy to the gentiles, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, to teach them the rudiments of happiness, and the first and lowest things of reason; that when Christ was come, all mankind might become perfect; that is, be made regular in their appetites, wise in their understandings, assisted in their duties, directed to and instructed in their great ends. And this is that which the apostle calls "being perfect men in Christ Jesus;" perfect in all the intendments of nature, and in all the designs of God. And this was brought to pass by discovering, and restoring, and improving the law of nature, and by turning it all into religion.

25. For the natural law being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being eternal and unalterable, (for it ought to be as lasting and as unchangeable as the nature itself, so long as it was capable of a law,) it was not imaginable, that the body of any law should make a new morality, new rules, and general proportions, either of justice, or religion, or temperance, or felicity; the essential parts of all these consisting in natural proportions, and means toward the consummation of man's last end, which was first intended, and is always the same. It is as if there were a new truth in an essential and a necessary proposition. For although the instances may vary, there can be no new justice, no new temperance, no new relations, proper and natural relations and intercourses between God and us; but what always were in praises and prayers, and in adoration and honour, and in

[s] Gal. iii 19.

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the symbolical expressions of God's glory and our needs.

26. Hence it comes, that that which is the most obvious and notorious appellative of the law of nature, that it is "a law written in our hearts," was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of christianity. Plutarch, saying that "kings ought to be governed by laws," explains himself, that this law must be "a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the mind, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners, and monitor of their life."[h] And this was the same which St. Paul expresses to be the guide of the gentiles, that is, of all men naturally. "The gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; which shows the work of the law written in their hearts."[1] And that we may see it was the law of nature, that returned in the sanctions of christianity, God declares, that, in the constitution of this law, he would take no other course than at first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men: indeed with a new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy Dove; the Spirit of God was to be the great engraver and the scribe of the new covenant, but the hearts of men should be the tables. "For this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them: and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more:"[k] that is, I will provide a means to expiate all the iniquities of man, and restore him to the condition of his first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity which I first designed to him, and that also by the same instruments. Now I consider, that the Spirit of God took very great care, that all the records of the law of Jesus should be carefully kept and transmitted to posterity in books and sermons, which, being an act of providence and mercy, was a provision, lest they should be lost or mistaken, as they were formerly, when God writ some of them in tables of stone for the use of the sons of Israel, and all of them in the first tables of nature with the finger of creation, as now he did in the new creature, by the finger of the Spirit. But then, writing them in the tables of our minds, besides the other, can mean nothing but placing them there, where they were before, and from whence we blotted them by the mixtures of impure principles and discourses. But I descend to particular and more minute considerations.

27. The laws of nature either are bands of religion, justice, or sobriety. Now I consider concerning religion, that whenever God hath made any particular precepts to a family, as to Abraham's; or to a single person, as to the man of Judah prophesying against the altar of Bethel; or to a nation, as to the Jews at Sinai; or to all mankind, as to the world descending from Noah; it was nothing else but a trial or an instance of our obedience, a particular prosecution of the law of nature, whereby we are obliged to do honour to God, which was to be done by such expressions, which are natural intercourses between God and us, or such as he hath made to be so. Now in christianity we are wholly left to that manner of prosecuting this first natural law, which is natural and proportionable to the nature of the thing, which the holy Jesus calls "worshipping God in spirit and truth:" in spirit, that is, with our souls heartily and devoutly, so as to exclude hypocrisy and indifferency; and in truth, that is, without a lie, without vain imaginations and phantastic resemblances of him, which were introduced by the evil customs of the gentiles, and without such false guises and absurd indecencies, which, as they are contrary to man's reason, so are they contrary to the glory and reputation of God;[1] such as was that universal custom of all nations, of sacrificing in man's blood, and offering festival-lusts and impurities in the solemnities of their religion; for these being against the purpose and design of God, and against right reason, are a lie, and enemies to the truth of a natural and proper religion. The holy Jesus only commanded us to pray often, and to praise God, to speak honour of his name, not to use it lightly and vainly, to believe him, to revere the instruments and ministers of religion, to ask for what we need, to put our trust in God, to worship him, to obey him, and to love him; for all these are but the expressions of love. And this is all Christ spake concerning the first natural law, the law of religion. For concerning the ceremonies or sacraments, which he instituted, they are but few, and they become matter of duty but by accident; as being instruments and rites of consigning those effects and mercies, which God sent to the world by the means of this law, and relate rather to the contract and stipulation, which Christ made for us, than to the natural order between duty and felicity.

28. Now all these are nothing but what we are taught by natural reason, that is, what God enabled us to understand, to be fit instruments of intercourse between God and us, and what was practised and taught by sober men in all ages and all nations, whose records we have received, as I shall remark at the margin of the several precepts. For to make these appear certainly and naturally necessary, there was no more requisite, but that man should know there was a God, that is, an eternal Being, which gave him all that he had or was; and to know what himself was, that is, indigent and necessitous of himself, needing help of all the creatures, exposed to accidents and calamity, and defensible no ways but by the same hand that made him; creation and conservation, in the philosophy of all the world, being but the same act, continuing and flowing on him from an instant to duration, as a line from its mathematical point. And for this God took sufficient care; for he conversed with man, in the very first, in such clear, and certain, and perceptible transaction, that a

[h] Οὐκ ἐν βιβλίοις ἔξω γεγραμμένος, οὐδὲ ἐν ξύλοις, ἀλλ' ἔμψυχος ὢν ἑαυτῷ λόγος, ἀεὶ συνοικῶν, καὶ μηδέποτε τὴν ψυχὴν ἐῶν ἔρημον κηδεμονίας.

[1] Rom. ii. 14, 15.
[k] Heb. x. 16, 17.
[l] Polyd. Virg. de Invent. l. v. c. 8.

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man could as certainly know that God was, as that man was. And in all ages of the world he hath not left himself without witness, but gave such testimonies of himself that were sufficient; for they did actually persuade all nations, barbarous and civil, into the belief of a God.[m] And it is but a nicety to consider, whether or no that proposition can be naturally demonstrated. For it was sufficient to all God's purposes, and to all man's, that the proposition was actually believed; the instances were therefore sufficient to make faith because they did it. And a man may remove himself so far from all the degrees of aptness to believe a proposition, that nothing shall make them join. For if there were a sect of witty men, that durst not believe their senses, because they thought them fallible, it is no wonder if some men should think every reason reprovable. But in such cases demonstration is a relative term, and signifies every probation, greater or lesser, which does actually make faith in any proposition; and in this God hath never been deficient, but hath to all men, that believe him, given sufficient to confirm them; to those few, that believed not, sufficient to reprove them.

29. Now in all these actions of religion, which are naturally consequent to this belief, there is no scruple, but in the instance of faith, which is presented to be an infused grace, an immission from God, and that for its object it hath principles supernatural, that is, naturally incredible; and therefore faith is supposed a grace above the greatest strength of reason. But in this I consider, that if we look into all the sermons of Christ,[n] we shall not easily find any doctrine that, in any sense, troubles natural philosophy, but only that of the resurrection (for I do not think those mystical expressions of plain truths, such as are, "being born again, eating the flesh of the Son of man, being in the Father, and the Father in him," to be exceptions in this assertion). And although some gentiles did believe and deliver that article, and particularly Chrysippus, and the Thracians; (as Mela and Solinus report of them;) yet they could not naturally discourse themselves into it, but had it from the imperfect report and opinion of some Jews that dwelt among them: and it was certainly a revelation or a proposition sent into the world by God. But then the believing it is so far from being above or against nature, that there is nothing in the world more reasonable, than to believe any thing which God tells us, or which is told us by a man sent from God, with mighty demonstration of his power and veracity. Naturally our bodies cannot rise, that is, there is no natural agent or natural cause sufficient to produce that effect; but this is an effect of a Divine power: and he hath but a little stock of natural reason, who cannot conclude, that the same power, which made us out of nothing, can also restore us to the same condition, as well and easily, from dust and ashes certainly, as from mere nothing. And in this, and in all the like cases, faith is a submission of the understanding to the word of God, and is nothing else but a confessing, that God is truth, and that he is omnipotent; that is, he can do what he will, and he will, when he hath once said it. And we are now as ignorant of the essence and nature of forms, and of that which substantially distinguishes man from man, or an angel from an angel, as we were of the greatest article of our religion, before it was revealed; and we shall remain ignorant for ever of many natural things, unless they be revealed; and unless we knew all the secrets of philosophy, the mysteries of nature, and the rules and propositions of all things and all creatures, we are fools, if we say, that what we call an article of faith, I mean, truly such, is against natural reason. It may be indeed as much against our natural reasonings, as those reasonings are against truth. But if we remember, how great an ignorance dwells upon us all, it will be found the most reasonable thing in the world only to inquire, whether God hath revealed any such proposition; and then not to say, It is against natural reason, and therefore an article of faith; but, I am told a truth which I knew not till now, and so my reason is become instructed into a new proposition. And although Christ hath given us no new moral precepts, but such which were essentially and naturally reasonable, in order to the end of man's creation; yet we may easily suppose him to teach us many a new truth, which we knew not, and to explicate to us many particulars of that estate, which God designed for man in his first production, but yet did not then declare to him; and to furnish him with new revelations, and to signify the greatness of the designed end, to become so many arguments of endearment to secure his duty, that is, indeed, to secure his happiness, by the infallible using the instruments of attaining it.

30. This is all I am to say concerning the precepts of religion Jesus taught us: he took off those many superinduced rites, which God enjoined to the Jews, and reduced us to the natural religion; that is, to such expressions of duty, which all wise men and nations used; save only, that he took away the rite of sacrificing beasts,[o] because it was now determined in the great sacrifice of himself, which sufficiently and eternally reconciled all the world to God. All the other things, as prayers, and adoration, and eucharist, and faith in God, are of a natural order and an unalterable expression: and, in the nature of the thing, there is no other way of address to God than these, no other expression of his glories and our needs; both which must for ever be signified.

31. Secondly; concerning the second natural precept, christian religion hath also added nothing beyond the first obligation, but explained it all: "Whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye so to them;"[p] that is the eternal rule of justice;

[m] Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. Ταῦτα ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος.—p. 6. ed. Dav.

[n] Apud Lactant. l. vii. c. 23.

[o] Just. Mart. Resp. ad Orthodox. ad qu. 83. Tertul. adv. Marcion. ii. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, l. iii. c. 32.

[p] Hæc sententia sæpissimè à Severo Imperatore prolata. Ὅ μισεις, μηδενὶ ποιήσεις, Tob. iv. 15. Dixit Mimus, "Ab alio expectes, alteri quod feceris."

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and that binds contracts, keeps promises, affirms truth, makes subjects obedient, and princes just; it gives security to marts and banks, and introduces an equality of condition upon all the world, save only when an inequality is necessary, that is, in the relations of government, for the preservation of the common[q] rights of equal titles and possessions, that there be some common term endued with power, who is to be the father of all men by an equal provision, that every man's rights be secured by that fear, which naturally we shall bear to him, who can, and will, punish all unreasonable and unjust violations of property. And concerning this, also, the holy Jesus hath added an express precept of paying tribute, and all Cæsar's dues, to Cæsar: in all other particulars it is necessary, that the instances and minutes of justice be appointed by the laws and customs of the several kingdoms and republics. And therefore it was, that christianity so well combined with the government of heathen princes;[r] because, whatsoever was naturally just, or declared so by the political power, their religion bound them to observe, making obedience to be a double duty, a duty both of justice and religion: and the societies of christians growing up from conventicles to assemblies, from assemblies to societies, introduced no change in the government; but by little and little turned the commonwealth into a church, till the world being christian, and justice also being religion, obedience to princes, observation of laws, honesty in contracts, faithfulness in promises, gratitude to benefactors, simplicity in discourse, and ingenuity in all pretences and transactions, became the characterisms of christian men, and the word of a christian the greatest solemnity of stipulation in the world.

32. But concerning the general, I consider, that in two very great instances it was remonstrated, that christianity was the greatest prosecution of natural justice and equality in the whole world. The one was in an election of an apostle into the place of Judas: when there were two equal candidates of the same pretension and capacity, the question was determined by lots, which naturally was the arbitration in questions whose parts were wholly indifferent; and as it was used in all times, so it is to this day used with us in many places, where, lest there be a disagreement concerning the manner of tithing some creatures, and to prevent unequal arts and unjust practices, they are tithed by lot, and their fortuitous passing through the door of their fold. The other is in the cenobitic life of the first christians and apostles: they had all things in common, which was that state of nature, in which men lived charitably and without injustice, before the distinction of dominions and private rites. But from this manner of life they were soon driven by the public necessity and constitution of affairs.

33. Thirdly, whatsoever else is in the christian law, concerns the natural precept of sobriety, in which there is some variety and some difficulty. In the matter of carnality, the holy Jesus did clearly reduce us to the first institution of marriage in paradise, allowing no other mixture, but what was first intended in the creation and first sacramental union: and in the instance he so permitted us to the natural law, that he was pleased to mention no instance of forbidden lust, but in general and comprehensive terms of adultery and fornication: in the other, which are still more unnatural, as their names are concealed and hidden in shame and secrecy, we are to have no instructor, but the modesty and order of nature.

34. As an instance of this law of sobriety, Christ superadded the whole doctrine of humility, which Moses did not, and which seemed almost to be extinguished in the world; and it is called by St. Paul, "sapere ad sobrietatem," the reasonableness or wisdom of sobriety. And it is all the reason in the world, that a man should think of himself but just as he is. He is deceived that thinks otherwise, and is a fool. And when we consider, that pride makes wars, and causes affronts, and no man loves a proud man, and he loves no man but himself and his flatterers, we shall understand, that the precept of humility is an excellent art, and a happy instrument towards human felicity. And it is no way contradicted by a natural desire of honour; it only appoints just and reasonable ways of obtaining it. We are not forbidden to receive honour; but to seek it for designs of pride and complacency, or to make it rest in our hearts. But when the hand of virtue receives the honour, and transmits it to God from our own head, the desires of nature are sufficiently satisfied, and nothing of religion contradicted. And it is certain, by all the experience of the world, that in every state and order of men, he, that is most humble in proportion to that state, is (if all things else be symbolical) the most honoured person. For it is very observable, that when God designed man to a good and happy life, as the natural end of his creation, to verify this, God was pleased to give him objects sufficient and apt to satisfy every appetite: I say, to satisfy it naturally, not to satisfy those extravagancies, which might be accidental, and procured by the irregularity either of will or understanding;[s] not to answer him in all that his desires could extend to, but to satisfy the necessity of every appetite; all the desires that God made, not all that man should make. For we see, even in those appetites which are common to men and beasts, all the needs of nature, and all the ends of creation, are served, by the taking such proportions of their objects, which are ordinate to their end, and which in man we call temperance (not as much as they naturally can); such as are mixtures of sexes merely for production of their kind, eating

[q] Singulorum interest, si universi regantur.

[r] Nec natura potest justo secernere iniquum,
Dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis.
HOR. l. i. Sat. 3.

[s] Vina sitim sedant, natis Venus alma creandis
Serviat: hos fines transiliisse nocet.—VIRG.

Ὁ μὲν τὰς ὑπερβολὰς διώκων τῶν ἡδέων, ἢ καθ' ὑπερβολὰς, ἢ διὰ προαίρεσιν, καὶ δι' αὐτὰς, καὶ μηδὲν δι' ἕτερον ἀποβαῖνον, ἀκόλαστος.—ARIST. Ethic. l. vii. c. 7. p. 294, ed. Wilk.

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and drinking for needs and hunger. And yet God permitted our appetites to be able to extend beyond the limits of the mere natural design, that God, by restraining them, and putting the fetters of laws upon them, might turn natural desires into sobriety, and sobriety into religion, they becoming servants of the commandment. And now we must not call all those swellings of appetites natural inclination, nor the satisfaction of such tumours and excrescencies any part of natural felicities; but that, which does just co-operate to those ends, which perfect human nature in order to its proper end. For the appetites of meat, and drink, and pleasures, are but intermedial and instrumental to that end, and are not made for themselves, but first for the end, and then to serve God in the instances of obedience. And just so is the natural desire of honour intended to be a spur to virtue; (for to virtue only it is naturally consequent, or to natural and political superiority;) but to desire it beyond, or besides, the limit, is the swelling and the disease of the desire. And we can take no rule for its perfect value, but by the strict limits of the natural end, or the superinduced end of religion in positive restraints.

35. According to this discourse we may best understand, that even the severest precepts of the christian law are very consonant to nature and the first laws of mankind. Such is the precept of self-denial, which is nothing else but a confining the appetites within the limits of nature: for there they are permitted, (except when some greater purpose is to be served, than the present answering the particular desire,) and whatsoever is beyond it is not in the natural order to felicity; it is no better than an itch, which must be scratched and satisfied, but it is unnatural. But, for martyrdom itself, quitting our goods, losing lands, or any temporal interest, they are now become as reasonable in the present constitution of the world, as taking unpleasant potions, and suffering a member to be cauterized, in sickness or disease. And we see, that death is naturally a less evil than a continual torment, and by some not so resented as a great disgrace; and some persons have chosen it for sanctuary and remedy: and therefore, much rather shall it be accounted prudent and reasonable, and agreeable to the most perfect desires of nature, to exchange a house for a hundred, a friend for a patron, a short affliction for a lasting joy, and a temporal death for an eternal life. For so the question is stated to us by Him, that understands it best. True it is, that the suffering of losses, afflictions, and death, is naturally an evil, and therefore no part of a natural precept, or prime injunction. But when, God having commanded instances of religion, man will not suffer us to obey God, or will not suffer us to live, then the question is, Which is most agreeable to the most perfect and reasonable desires of nature, to obey God, or to obey man; to fear God, or to fear man; to preserve our bodies, or to preserve our souls; to secure a few years of uncertain and troublesome duration, or an eternity of a very glorious condition? Some men, reasonably enough, choose to die for considerations lower than that of a happy eternity; therefore death is not such an evil, but that it may, in some cases, be desired and reasonably chosen, and, in some, be recompensed at the highest rate of a natural value: and if by accident we happen into an estate, in which of necessity one evil or another must be suffered, certainly nothing is more naturally reasonable and eligible than to choose the least evil; and when there are two good things propounded to our choice, both which cannot be possessed, nothing is more certainly the object of a prudent choice than the greater good. And therefore, when once we understand the question of suffering, and self-denial, and martyrdom to this sense, as all christians do, and all wise men do, and all sects of men do in their several persuasions, it is but remembering, that to live happily after this life is more intended to us by God, and is more perfective of human nature, than to live here with all the prosperity which this state affords; and it will evidently follow, that when violent men will not let us enter into that condition by the ways of nature and prime intendment, that is, of natural religion, justice, and sobriety, it is made, in that case, and upon that supposition, certainly, naturally, and infallibly reasonable, to secure the perfective and principal design of our felicity, though it be by such instruments, which are as unpleasant to our senses, as are the instruments of our restitution to health; since both one and the other, in the present conjunction and state of affairs, are most proportionable to reason, because they are so to the present necessity; not primarily intended to us by God, but superinduced by evil accidents and the violence of men. And we not only find that Socrates suffered death in attestation of a God, though he flattered and discoursed himself into the belief of an immortal reward, "de industria consultæ æquanimitatis, non de fiducia compertæ veritatis," as Tertullian says of him; but we also find, that all men, that believed the immortality of the soul firmly and unmovably, made no scruple of exchanging their life for the preservation of virtue, with the interest of their great hope, for honour sometimes, and oftentimes for their country.

36. Thus the holy Jesus perfected and restored the natural law, and drew it into a system of propositions, and made them to become of the family of religion. For God is so zealous to have man attain to the end to which he first designed him, that those things, which he hath put in the natural order to attain that end, he hath bound fast upon us, not only by the order of things, by which it was, that he that prevaricated did naturally fall short of felicity, but also by bands of religion; he hath now made himself a party and an enemy to those, that will not be happy. Of old, religion was but one of the natural laws, and the instances of religion were distinct from the discourses of philosophy. Now, all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to God we are tied to do all that is reason; and the parts of our religion are but pursuances of the natural relation between God and us: and beyond all this, our natural condition is, in all senses, improved by the consequents and adherences of this religion. For although nature and

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grace are opposite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance, and ungodly customs, is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the Spirit; yet it is observable, that the law of nature and the law of grace are never opposed. "There is a law of our members," [t] saith St. Paul; that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites, by perpetual evil customs, examples, and traditions of vanity; and there is a law of sin, that answers to this: and they differ only as inclination and habit, vicious desires and vicious practices. But then contrary to these are, first, "a law of my mind," [u] which is the law of nature and right reason, and then the law of grace, that is, of Jesus Christ, who perfected and restored the first law, and by assistances reduced it into a law of holy living: and these two differ as the other; the one is in order to the other, as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection and consummation. The law of the mind had been so rased and obliterate, and we, by some means or other, so disabled from observing it exactly, that until it was turned into the law of grace, (which is a law of pardoning infirmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections,) we were in a state of deficiency from the perfective state of man, to which God intended us.

37. Now, although God always designed man to the same state, which he hath now revealed by Jesus Christ, yet he told him not of it; and his permissions and licenses were then greater, and the law itself lay closer folded up in the compact body of necessary propositions, in order to so much of his end, as was known, or could be supposed. But now, according to the extension of the revelation, the law itself is made wider, that is, more explicit; and natural reason is thrust forward into discourses of charity and benefit, and we tied to do very much good to others, and tied to co-operate to each other's felicity.

38. That the law of charity is a law of nature, needs no other argument but the consideration of the first constitution of man. The first instances of justice or intercourse of man with a second or third person, were to such persons, towards whom he had the greatest endearments of affection in the world, a wife and children; and justice and charity, at first, was the same thing. And it hath obtained in ages far removed from the first, that charity is called righteousness: [x] "He hath dispersed and given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever." [y] And it is certain, Adam could not in any instance be unjust, but he must in the same also be uncharitable: the band of his first justice being the ties of love, and all having commenced in love. And our blessed Lord, restoring all to the intention of the first perfection, expresses it to the same sense, as I formerly observed; justice to our neighbour, is loving him as ourselves. For, since justice obliges us to do as we would be done to, as the irascible faculty restrains us from doing evil for fear of receiving evil, so the concupiscible obliges us to charity, that ourselves may receive good.

39. I shall say nothing concerning the reasonableness of this precept, but that it concurs rarely with the first reasonable appetite of man, of being like God. "Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via," said Pliny; and, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore the commandment of charity, in all its parts, is a design not only to reconcile the most miserable person to some participation and sense of felicity, but to make the charitable man happy; and whether this be not very agreeable to the desires of an intelligent nature, needs no further inquiry. And Aristotle, asking the question, Whether a man had more need of friends in prosperity or adversity? makes the case equal: Ὅτε γὰρ ἀτυχοῦντες δέονται ἐπίκουρίας· οἱ δὲ ἐντυχοῦντες συμβίων, οὓς ἐυποιήσωσιν. "When they are in want, they need assistance; when they are prosperous, they need partners of their felicity, that, by communicating their joy to them, it may reflect and double upon their spirits." And certain it is, there is no greater felicity in the world, than in the content that results from the emanations of charity. And this is that which St. John [z] calls "the old commandment," and "the new commandment." It was of old, for it was from the beginning, [a] even in nature, and to the offices of which our very bodies had an organ and a seat; for therefore nature gave to a man bowels and the passion of yearning; but it grew up into religion by parts, and was made perfect, and, in that degree, appropriate to the law of Jesus Christ. For so the holy Jesus became our lawgiver, and added many new precepts over and above what were in the law of Moses, but not more than was in the law of nature. The reason of both is, what I have all this while discoursed of: Christ made a more perfect restitution of the law of nature, than Moses did, and so it became the second Adam to consummate that, which began to be less perfect, from the prevarication of the first Adam.

40. A particular of the precept of charity is forgiving injuries; and besides that it hath many superinduced benefits, by way of blessing and reward, it relies also upon this natural reason, that a pure and a simple revenge does no way restore man towards the felicity, which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is a doing a simple evil, and does not, in its formality, imply reparation; for the mere repeating of our own right is permitted to them,

[t] Rom. vii. 23. [u] Ibid.
[x] Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐνεργετικὸς πέφυκε.—M. Anton. l. ix.
[y] Psalm cxii. 9.
[z] 1 John ii. 7, 8.
[a] ——Ἄνδρα δ' ὠφελεῖν, ἀφ' ὧν
Ἔχοι τε καὶ δύναιτο, κάλλιστος πόνων.
Sophocl. Œdip. Tyr.

—— Hoc reges habent
Magnificum et ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies;
Prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare
Protegere—— Senec. Med. 222.

—— Mollissima corda
Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,
Quæ lacrymas dedit: hæc nostri pars optima sensûs.
Juvén. Sat. 15. 131.

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that will do it by charitable instruments; and to secure myself or the public against the future, by positive inflictions upon the injurious, (if I be not judge myself,) is also within the moderation of an unblamable defence, (unless some accidents or circumstances vary the case); but forgiving injuries is a separating the malice from the wrong, the transient act from the permanent effect; and it is certain, the act which is passed cannot be rescinded; the effect may; and if it cannot, it does no way alleviate the evil of the accident, that I draw him, that caused it, into as great a misery: since every evil, happening in the world, is the proper object of pity, which is in some sense afflictive; and therefore, unless we become unnatural and without bowels, it is most unreasonable, that we should increase our own afflictions by introducing a new misery, and making a new object of pity. All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for, without it, we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil, that no way co-operates towards the proper and perfective end of human nature. And he is a miserable person, whose good is the evil of his neighbour;[b] and he that revenges, in many cases, does worse than he that did the injury; in all cases, as bad. For if the first injury was an injustice to serve an end of an advantage and real benefit; then my revenge, which is abstracted, and of a consideration separate and distinct from the reparation, is worse; for I do him evil, without doing myself any real good; which he did not, for he received advantage by it. But if the first injury was matter of mere malice without advantage, yet it is no worse than revenge, for that is just so; and there is as much fantastic pleasure in doing a spite, as in doing revenge: they are both but like the pleasures of eating coals, and toads, and vipers. And certain it is, if a man, upon his private stock, could be permitted to revenge, the evil would be immortal. And it is rarely well discoursed by Tyndarus in Euripides: "If the angry wife shall kill her husband, the son shall revenge his father's death, and kill his mother, and then the brother shall kill his mother's murderer, and he also will meet with an avenger for killing his brother."

Πέρας δή ποῖ κακῶν προβήσεται;[c]

"What end shall there be to such" inhuman and "sad accidents?" If in this there be injustice, it is against natural reason: and, if it be evil, and disorders the felicity and security of society, it is also against natural reason: but if it be just, it is a strange justice, that is made up of so many inhumanities.

41. And now, if any man pretends specially to reason, to the ordinate desires and perfections of nature, and the sober discourses of philosophy, here is in christianity, and no where else, enough to satisfy and inform his reason, to perfect his nature, and to reduce to act all the propositions of an intelligent and wise spirit. And the Holy Ghost is promised and given in our religion, to be an eternal band to keep our reason from returning to the darknesses of the old creation, and to promote the ends of our natural and proper felicity. For it is not a vain thing, that St. Paul reckons helps, and governments, and healings, to be fruits of the Spirit. For since the two greatest blessings of the world, personal and political, consist, that in health, this in government;[d] and the ends of human felicity are served in nothing greater for the present interval, than in these two; Christ did not only enjoin rare prescriptions of health, such as are fasting, temperance, chastity, and sobriety, and all the great endearments of government; (and, unless they be sacredly observed, man is infinitely miserable;) but also hath given his Spirit, that is, extraordinary aids to the promoting these two, and facilitating the work of nature; that (as St. Paul says at the end of a discourse to this very purpose) "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."[e]

42. I shall add nothing but this single consideration: God said to the children of Israel, "Ye are a royal priesthood,"[f] a kingdom of priests: which was therefore true, because God reigned by the priests, and the priests' lips did then preserve knowledge, and the people were to receive the law from their mouths; for God having, by laws of his own, established religion and the republic, did govern by the rule of the law, and the ministry of the priests. The priests said, "Thus saith the Lord;" and the people obeyed. And these very words are spoken to the christian church: "Ye are a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him, that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." That is, God reigns over all christendom, just as he did over the Jews. He hath now so given to them and restored respectively all those reasonable laws, which are in order to all good ends, personal, economical, and political, that if men will suffer christian religion to do its last intention, if men will live according to it, there needs no other coercion of laws or power of the sword. The laws of God, revealed by Christ, are sufficient to make all societies of men happy; and over all good men God reigns by his ministers, by the preaching of the word. And this was most evident in the three first ages of the church, in which all christian societies were, for all their proper intercourses, perfectly guided, not by the authority and compulsion,

[b] Ὁ τιμωρῶν τοῦ προϋπάρξαντος ἀδικώτερος.—Maxim. Tyrius in Dissert. an referenda sit Injuria, p. 26.

Ἅπαντα τὰ ζῶ' ἐστι μακαριώτερα,
Καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντα μᾶλλον ἀνθρώπου πολύ.
Τὸν ὄνον ὁρᾷν ἔξεστι πρώτα τουτονί.
Τούτῳ κακὸν δι' αὑτὸν οὐδὲν γίγνεται.
Ἡμεῖς δέ, χωρὶς τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν,
Αὐτοὶ παρ' αὑτῶν ἕτερα προσπορίζομεν.
Λυπούμεθ', ἂν πτάρῃ τις· ἂν εἴπῃ κακῶς,
Ὀργιζόμεθ'· ἂν ὕδῃ τις ἐνύπνιον, σφόδρα
Φοβούμεθ'· ἂν γλαὺξ ἀνακράγῃ, διεδοίκαμεν.
Menand. p. 244.

[c] Eurip. Orest. 504. Pors.

[d] Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat, acceptius, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur.—Cicer. Somn. Scipion. sec. 3.

[e] 2 Cor. iv. 7.

[f] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

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but by the sermons, of their spiritual guides; insomuch that St. Paul sharply reprehends the Corinthians, that "brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers;" as if he had said, "Ye will not suffer Christ to be your Judge, and his law to be your rule:" which indeed was a great fault among them, not only because they had so excellent a law, so clearly described, (or, where they might doubt, they had infallible interpreters,) so reasonable and profitable, so evidently concurring to their mutual felicity; but also because God did design Jesus to be their King, to reign over them by spiritual regiment, as himself did over the Jews, till they chose a king. And when the emperors became christian, the case was no otherwise altered, but that the princes themselves, submitting to Christ's yoke, were, (as all other christians are,) for their proportion, to be governed by the royal priesthood, that is, by the word preached by apostolical persons, the political interest remaining as before, save that, by being submitted to the laws of Christ, it received this advantage, that all justice was turned to be religion, and became necessary, and bound upon the conscience by Divinity. And when it happens, that a kingdom is converted to christianity, the commonwealth is made a church, and gentile priests are christian bishops, and the subjects of the kingdom are servants of Christ, the religion of the nation is turned christian, and the law of the nation made a part of the religion; there is no change of government, but that Christ is made King, and the temporal power is his substitute, and is to promote the interest of obedience to him, as before he did to Christ's enemy; Christ having left his ministers as lieger ambassadors, to signify and publish the laws of Jesus, to pray all in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God; so that, over the obedient, Christ wholly reigns by his ministers publishing his laws; over the disobedient, by the prince also putting those laws in execution. And in this sense it is, that St. Paul says, "Bonis lex non est posita;" "To such (who live after the Spirit) there is no law;" that is, there needs no coercion. But now, if we reject God from the reigning over us, and say, like the people in the gospel, "Nolumus hunc regnare," "We will not have him to reign over us," by the ministry of his word, by the empire of the royal priesthood, then we return to the condition of heathens, and persons sitting in darkness; then God hath armed the temporal power with a sword to cut us off. If we obey not God, speaking by his ministers, that is, if we live not according to the excellent laws of christianity, that is, holily, soberly, and justly in all our relations, he hath placed three swords against us; the sword of the Spirit, against the unholy and irreligious; the sword of natural and supervening infelicities, upon the intemperate and unsober; and the sword of kings, against the unjust; to remonstrate the excellency of christianity, and how certainly it leads to all the felicity of man; because every transgression of this law, according to its proportion, makes men unhappy and unfortunate.

43. What effect this discourse may have, I know not; I intended it to do honour to christianity, and to represent it to be the best religion in the world, and the conjugation of all excellent things, that were in any religion, or in any philosophy, or in any discourses. For "whatsoever was honest, whatsoever was noble, whatsoever was wise, whatsoever was of good report, if there be any praise, if there be any virtue,"[s] it is in christianity; for even to follow all these instances of excellency, is a precept of christianity. And methinks, they, that pretend to reason, cannot more reasonably endear themselves to the reputation of reason, than by endearing their reason to christianity; the conclusions and belief of which is the most reasonable and perfect, the most excellent design, and complying with the noblest and most proper ends of man. And if this gate may suffice to invite such persons into the recesses of the religion, then I shall tell them, that I have dressed it in the ensuing books with some variety: and as the nature of the religion is, some parts whereof are apt to satisfy our discourse, some to move our affections, and yet all of this to relate to practice; so is the design of the following pages. For some men are wholly made up of passion, and their very religion is but passion, put into the family and society of holy purposes; and, for those, I have prepared considerations upon the special parts of the life of the holy Jesus: and yet there also are some things, mingled in the least severe and most affectionate parts, which may help to answer a question, and appease a scruple, and may give rule for determination of many cases of conscience. For I have so ordered the considerations, that they spend not themselves in mere affections and ineffective passions, but they are made doctrinal, and little repositories of duty. But because of the variety of men's spirits and of men's necessities, it was necessary I should interpose some practical discourses more severe: for it is but a sad thought to consider, that piety and books of devotion are counted but entertainment for little understandings and softer spirits; and although there is much fault in such imperious minds, that they will not distinguish the weakness of the writers from the reasonableness and wisdom of the religion; yet I cannot but think, the books themselves are, in a large degree, the occasion of so great indevotion; because they are (some few excepted) represented naked in the conclusions of spiritual life, without or art or learning, and made apt for persons, who can do nothing but believe and love; not for them, that can consider and love. And it is not well, that, since nothing is more reasonable and excellent in all perfections spiritual than the doctrines of the Spirit, or holy life; yet nothing is offered to us so unlearnedly as this is, so miserable and empty of all its own intellectual perfections. If I could, I would have had it otherwise in the present books; for, since the understanding is not an idle faculty in a spiritual life, but hugely operative to all excellent and reasonable choices, it were very fit, that this faculty were also entertained by such discourses, which God intended as instruments of hallowing it,

[s] Phil. iv. 8.

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as he intended it towards the sanctification of the whole man. For want of it, busy and active men entertain themselves with notions infinitely unsatisfying and unprofitable: but in the mean time, they are not so wise; for, concerning those, that study unprofitable notions, and neglect not only that which is wisest, but that also which is of most real advantage, I cannot but think, as Aristotle did of Thales and Anaxagoras, that "They may be learned, but they are not wise; or wise, but not prudent, when they are ignorant of such things, as are profitable to them: for, suppose they know the wonders of nature, and the subtilties of metaphysics, and operations mathematical; yet they cannot be prudent, who spend themselves wholly upon unprofitable and ineffective contemplations."[h] He is truly wise, that knows best to promote the best end, that which he is bound to desire; and is happy if he obtains, and miserable if he misses; and that is the end of a happy eternity, which is obtained by the only means of living according to the purposes of God, and the prime intentions of nature; natural and prime reason being now all one with the christian religion. But then I shall only observe, that this part of wisdom, and the excellency of its secret and deep reason, is not to be discerned but by experience; the propositions of this philosophy being (as in many other) empirical, and best found out by observation of real and material events. So that I may say of spiritual learning, as Quinctilian said of some of Plato's books: "Nam Plato, cùm in aliis quibusdam, tum præcipuè in Timæo, ne intelligi quidem, nisi ab iis qui hanc quoque partem disciplinæ [musicæ] diligenter perceperint, potest." The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom; and by them too, in several degrees, and to various purposes: but to evil persons the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boor, and music to a camel.

44. But I consider, that the wisest persons, and those who know how to value and entertain the more noble faculties of their soul, and their precious hours, take more pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits, who preserved natural reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkness: (such as are Homer, Euripides, Orpheus, Pindar, and Anacreon, Æschylus and Menander, and all the Greek poets; Plutarch and Polybius, Xenophon, and all those other excellent persons of both faculties, (whose choicest dictates are collected by Stobæus,) Plato and his scholars, Aristotle, and after him Porphyry, and all his other disciples, Pythagoras and his, especially Hierocles; all the old academics and stoics within the Roman schools:) more pleasure, I say, in reading these, than the triflings of many of the latter schoolmen, who promoted a petty interest of a family, or an unlearned opinion, with great earnestness; but added nothing to christianity but trouble, scruple, and vexation. And from hence I hope, that they may the rather be invited to love and consider the rare documents of christianity, which certainly is the great treasure-house of those excellent, moral, and perfective discourses, which with much pains and greater pleasure we find respersed and thinly scattered in all the Greek and Roman poets, historians, and philosophers.

But because I have observed, that there are some principles entertained into the persuasions of men, which are the seeds of evil life, such as are—the doctrine of late repentance, the mistakes of the definition of the sins of infirmity, the evil understanding the consequents and nature of original sin, the sufficiency of contrition in order to pardon, the efficacy of the rites of christianity without the necessity of moral adherencies, the nature of faith, and many other; I was diligent to remark such doctrines, and to pare off the mistakes so far, that they hinder not piety, and yet, as near as I could, without engaging in any question, in which the very life of christianity is not concerned.

> Hæc sum profatus——haud ambagibus
> Implicita, sed quæ, regulis æqui et boni
> Suffulta, rudibus pariter et doctis patent.[i]

My great purpose, is to advance the necessity, and to declare the manner and parts, of a good life;[k] and to invite some persons to the consideration of all the parts of it, by intermixing something of pleasure with the use; others, by such parts which will better entertain their spirits, than a romance. I have followed the design of scripture, and have given milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat; and in all I have despised my own reputation, by so striving to make it useful, that I was less careful to make it strict in retired senses, and embossed with unnecessary, but graceful, ornaments. I pray God, this may go forth into a blessing to all that shall use it, and reflect blessings upon me all the way, that my spark may grow greater by kindling my brother's taper, and God may be glorified in us both. If the reader shall receive no benefit, yet I intended him one, and I have laboured in order to it; and I shall receive a great recompence for that intention, if he shall please to say this prayer for me,—"That while I have preached to others, I may not become a cast-away."

[h] Διὸ Ἀναξαγόραν, καὶ Θαλῆν, καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους, σοφοὺς μὲν, φρονίμους δ' οὐ φασιν εἶναι, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἀγνοοῦντας τὰ συμφέροντθ' αὑτοῖς· καὶ περιττὰ μὲν, καὶ θαυμαστὰ, καὶ χαλεπὰ, καὶ δαιμόνια ειδέναι αὐτοὺς φασιν· ἄχρηστα δ', ὅτι οὐ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀναθὰ ζητοῦσιν.—Arist. l. vi. Eth. cap. 7. p. 244.

[i] Polynic. apud Eurip. Phoen. 504. Pors.

[k] Ἡ παροῦσα πραγματεία οὐ θεωρίας ἕνεκά ἐστιν, ὥσπερ αἱ ἄλλαι· οὐ γὰρ ἵν' εἰδῶμεν τί ἐστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ, σκεπτόμεθα, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γινώμεθα.—Arist. Ethic. l. ii. c. 2.

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AN EXHORTATION

TO THE IMITATION OF

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

HOWEVER the person of Jesus Christ was depressed with a load of humble accidents, and shadowed with the darknesses of poverty and sad contingencies, so that the Jews, and the contemporary ages of the gentiles, and the apostles themselves, could not at first discern the brightest essence of divinity; yet as a beauty, artificially covered with a thin cloud of Cyprus, transmits its excellency to the eye, made more greedy and apprehensive by that imperfect and weak restraint; so was the sanctity and holiness of the life of Jesus glorious in its darknesses, and found confessors and admirers even in the midst of those despites which were done him upon the contrariant designs of malice and contradictory ambition. Thus the wife of Pilate called him "that just person;" Pilate pronounced him "guiltless;" Judas said he was "innocent;" the devil himself called him "the Holy One of God." For however it might concern any man's mistaken ends, to mislike the purpose of his preaching and spiritual kingdom, and those doctrines, which were destructive of their complacencies and carnal securities; yet they could not deny but that he was a man of God, of exemplar sanctity, of an angelical chastity, of a life sweet, affable, and complying with human conversation, and as obedient to government as the most humble children of the kingdom. And yet he was Lord of all the world.

2. And certainly, very much of this was with a design, that he might shine to all the generations and ages of the world, and become a guiding star and a pillar of fire to us in our journey. For we, who believe that Jesus was perfect God and perfect man, do also believe, that one minute of his intolerable passion, and every action of his, might have been satisfactory, and enough for the expiation and reconcilement of ten thousand worlds; and God might, upon a less effusion of blood, and a shorter life of merit, if he had pleased, have accepted human nature to pardon and favour: but, that the holy Jesus hath added so many excellent instances of holiness, and so many degrees of passion, and so many kinds of virtues, is, that he might become an example to us, and reconcile our wills to him, as well as our persons to his heavenly Father.

3. And indeed it will prove but a sad consideration, that one drop of blood might be enough to obtain our pardon, and the treasures of his blood running out till the fountain itself was dry, shall not be enough to procure our conformity to him; that the smallest minute of his expense shall be enough to justify us, and the whole magazine shall not procure our sanctification; that at a smaller expense God might pardon us, and at a greater we will not imitate him: for therefore "Christ hath suffered for us," saith the apostle, "leaving an example to us, that we might follow his steps."[a] The least of our wills cost Christ as much as the greatest of our sins. And therefore he calls himself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life:" that as he redeems our souls from death to life, by becoming life to our persons; so he is the truth to our understandings, and the way to our will and affections, enlightening that, and leading these in the paths of a happy eternity.

4. When the king of Moab was pressed hard by the sons of Isaac,[b] the Israelites and Edomites, he took the king of Edom's eldest son, or, as some think, his own son, the heir of his kingdom, and offered him as a holocaust upon the wall; and the Edomites presently raised the siege at Kir-haraseth, and went to their own country. The same, and much more, was God's design, who took not his enemy's, but his own Son, his only begotten Son, and God himself, and offered him up in sacrifice, to make us leave our perpetual fightings against Heaven; and if we still persist, we are hardened beyond the wildnesses of the Arabs and Edomites, and neither are receptive of the impresses of pity nor humanity, who neither have compassion to the suffer-

[a] 1 Pet. ii. 21.

[b] 2 Kings iii. 27.

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ing of Jesus, nor compliance with the designs of God, nor conformity to the holiness and obedience of our Guide. In a dark night, if an ignis fatuus do but precede us, the glaring of its lesser flames does so amuse our eyes, that we follow it into rivers and precipices, as if the ray of that false light were designed on purpose to be our path to tread in: and therefore not to follow the glories of the Sun of righteousness, who indeed leads us over rocks and difficult places, but secures us against the danger, and guides us into safety, is both the greatest indecency and unthankfulness in the world.

5. In the great council of eternity, when God set down the laws, and knit fast the eternal bands, of predestination, he made it one of his great purposes to make his Son like us,[c] that we also might be like his holy Son; he, by taking our nature; we, by imitating his holiness: "God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son,"[d] saith the apostle. For the first in every kind is in nature propounded as the pattern of the rest; and as the sun, the prince of all the bodies of light, and the fire of all warm substances, is the principal, the rule and the copy, which they in their proportions imitate and transcribe; so is the Word incarnate the great example of all the predestinate; for "he is the first-born among many brethren."[e] And therefore it was a precept of the apostle, and by his doctrine we understand its meaning, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."[f] The similitude declares the duty. As a garment is composed and made of the same fashion with the body, and is applied to each part in its true figure and commensuration; so should we put on Christ, and imitate the whole body of his sanctity, conforming to every integral part, and express him in our lives, that God, seeing our impresses, may know whose image and superscription we bear, and we may be acknowledged for sons, when we have the air, and features, and resemblances of our elder brother.[g]

6. In the practice of this duty we may be helped by certain considerations, which are like the proportion of so many rewards. For this, according to the nature of all holy exercises, stays not for pay, till its work be quite finished; but, like music in churches, is pleasure, and piety, and salary besides. So is every work of grace; full of pleasure in the execution, and is abundantly rewarded, besides the stipend of a glorious eternity.

7. First: I consider that nothing is more honourable than to be like God; and the heathens, worshippers of false deities, grew vicious upon that stock;[h] and we who have fondnesses of imitation, counting a deformity full of honour, if by it we may be like our prince,[i] (for pleasures were in their height in Capreæ, because Tiberius there wallowed in them, and a wry neck in Nero's court was the mode of gallantry,) might do well to make our imitations prudent and glorious; and, by propounding excellent examples, heighten our faculties to the capacities of an evenness with the best of precedents. He that strives to imitate another, admires him, and confesses his own imperfections; and therefore, that our admirations be not flattering, nor our confessions fantastic and impertinent, it were but reasonable to admire Him, from whom really all perfections do derive, and before whose glories all our imperfections must confess their shame, and needs of reformation. God, by a voice from heaven, and by sixteen generations of miracles and grace, hath attested the holy Jesus to be the Fountain of sanctity, and the "wonderful Counsellor," and "the Captain of our sufferings," and the Guide of our manners, by being his beloved Son, in whom he took pleasure and complacency to the height of satisfaction: and if any thing in the world be motive of our affections, or satisfactory to our understandings, what is there in heaven or earth we can desire or imagine beyond a likeness to God, and participation of the Divine nature and perfections? And therefore, as, when the sun arises, every man goes to his work, and warms himself with his heat, and is refreshed with his influences, and measures his labour with his course; so should we frame all the actions of our life by His light, who hath shined by an excellent righteousness, that we no more walk in darkness, or sleep in lethargies, or run a gazing after the lesser and imperfect beauties of the night. It is the weakness of the organ, that makes us hold our hand between the sun and us, and yet stand staring upon a meteor or an inflamed jelly. And our judgments are as mistaken, and our appetites are as sottish, if we propound to ourselves, in the courses and designs of perfections, any copy but of Him, or something like Him, who is the most perfect. And lest we think his glories too great to behold,

8. Secondly, I consider, that the imitation of the life of Jesus is a duty of that excellency and perfection, that we are helped in it, not only by the assistance of a good and a great example, which possibly might be too great, and scare our endeavours and attempts; but also by its easiness, compliance, and proportion to us.[k] For Jesus, in his whole life, conversed with men with a modest

[c] Διὰ θεομιμησίαν εἰς θεοπτίαν ἀξιώτερος.—S. Dionys.
[d] Rom. viii. 29.
[e] Ibid.
[f] Rom xiii. 14.
[g] Ἡ δὲ σύμφωνος τῷ νόμῳ τιμὴ, ἥτις οὐσίας ἐστι τῶν τιμωμένων γνῶσις, καὶ ἡ πρὸς ἀυτὴν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοίωσις· ὃ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, καὶ μιμεῖται ὅσον οἷόν τε· ὡς γὰρ φασιν οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι, Τιμήσεις τὸν Θεὸν ἄριστα, ἐὰν τῷ Θεῷ τὴν διάνοιαν ὁμοιώσῃς.—Hierocles.
[h] Adulterio delectatur quis? Jovem respicit, et inde cupiditatis suæ fomenta conquirit: probat, imitatur, et laudat, quòd Deus suus in cycno fallit, in tauro rapit, ludit in Satyro. Cœnum de Cœlo facitis, et errantes animos per abrupta præcipitia crudeli calamitate ducitis, cùm hominibus peccare volentibus facinorum viam deorum monstratis exemplis.—Julius Firmic. de Error. prof. Relig.
[i] Facere rectè cives suos princeps optimus faciendo docet: cùmque sit imperio magnus, exemplo magis est.—Vellei. Paterc. ii. 126. 5.—Krause.

——νουθετητέος δέ μοι
Φοῖβος, τί πάσχει παρθένους βίᾳ γαμῶν,
Προδίδωσι παῖδας ἐκτεκνούμενος λάθρα
Θνήσκοντας, ἀμέλει μὴ σύ γ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς,
Ἀρετὰς δίωκε. Eurip. Ion. 436.

[k] Admonetur omnis ætas fieri posse, quod aliquando factum est. Exempla fiunt, quæ jam esse facinora desiterunt.—S. Cyprian.

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virtue, which, like a well-kindled fire fitted with just materials, casts a constant heat; not like an inflamed heap of stubble, glaring with great emissions, and suddenly stooping into the thickness of smoke. His piety was even, constant, unblamable, complying with civil society, without affrightment of precedent, or prodigious instances of actions greater than the imitation of men. For if we observe our blessed Saviour in the whole story of his life, although he was without sin, yet the instances of his piety were the actions of a very holy, but of an ordinary life; and we may observe this difference in the story of Jesus from ecclesiastical writings of certain beatified persons, whose life is told rather to amaze us, and to create scruples, than to lead us in the evenness and serenity of a holy conscience. Such are the prodigious penances of Simeon Stylites, the abstinence of the religious retired into the mountain Nitria, but especially the stories of later saints, in the midst of a declining piety and aged christendom, where persons are represented holy by way of idea and fancy, if not to promote the interests of a family and institution. But our blessed Saviour, though his eternal union and adherencies of love and obedience to his heavenly Father were next to infinite, yet in his external actions, in which only, with the correspondence of the Spirit in those actions, he propounds himself imitable, he did so converse with men, that men, after that example, might for ever converse with him. We find that some saints have had excrescencies and eruptions of holiness in the instances of uncommanded duties, which in the same particulars we find not in the story of the life of Jesus. John Baptist was a greater mortifier than his Lord was; and some princes have given more money than all Christ's family did, whilst he was alive: but the difference, which is observable, is, that although some men did some acts of counsel in order to attain that perfection, which in Jesus was essential and unalterable, and was not acquired by degrees, and means of danger and difficulty; yet no man ever did his whole duty, save only the holy Jesus. The best of men did sometimes actions not precisely and strictly requisite, and such as were besides the precept; but yet, in the greatest flames of their shining piety, they prevaricated something of the commandment. They that have done the most things beyond, have also done some things short of, their duty; but Jesus, who intended himself the example of piety, did in manners as in the rule of faith, which, because it was propounded to all men, was fitted to every understanding; it was true, necessary, short, easy, and intelligible. So was his rule and his copy fitted, not only with excellencies worthy, but with compliances possible, to be imitated: of glories so great, that the most early and constant industry must confess its own imperfections; and yet so sweet and humane, that the greatest infirmity, if pious, shall find comfort and encouragement. Thus God gave his children manna from heaven; and though it was excellent, like the food of angels, yet it conformed to every palate, according to that appetite which their several fancies and constitutions did produce.

9. But now, when the example of Jesus is so excellent, that it allures and tempts with its facility and sweetness, and that we are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells of ecstasies in prayer,[1] and abstractions of senses, and immaterial transportations, and fastings to the exinanition of spirits, and disabling all animal operations; but a life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion; such a life, without which human society cannot be conversed, and by which, as our irregularities are made regular, so our weaknesses are not upbraided, nor our miseries made a mockery. We find so much reason to address ourselves to a heavenly imitation of so blessed a pattern, that the reasonableness of the thing will be a great argument to chide every degree and minute of neglect. It was a strange and a confident encouragement, which Phocion used to a timorous Greek, who was condemned to die with him:—"Is it not enough to thee, that thou must die with Phocion?" I am sure, he that is most incurious of the issues of his life, is yet willing enough to reign with Jesus, when he looks upon the glories represented without the duty; but it is a very great stupidity and unreasonableness, not to live with him in the imitation of so holy and so prompt a piety. It is glorious to do what he did, and a shame to decline his sufferings, when there was a God to hallow and sanctify the actions, and a man clothed with infirmity to undergo the sharpness of the passion; so that the glory of the person added excellency to the first, and the tenderness of the person excused not from suffering the latter.

10. Thirdly: Every action of the life of Jesus, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that, by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us, and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation, by way of influence and impetration. For, as in the acquisition of habits, the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of itself; so does every exercise of the life of Christ kindle its own fires, inspires breath into itself, and makes an univocal production of itself in a differing subject. And Jesus becomes the fountain of spiritual life to us, as the prophet Elisha to the dead child: when he stretched his hands upon the child's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him, the spirit returned again into the child, at the prayer of Elisha; so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest Jesus, the Spirit of God returns into us, not only by the efficacy of the imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of Jesus. It is reported in the Bohemian story,[m] that St. Wenceslaus, their king, one winter night going to his devotions, in a remote church, barefooted in the snow and sharp-

[1] Ὡς ἐνὶχόμενος τοῖς θεοῖς μετεωρίζῃ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πλέον ἢ δίκα πήχεις εἱκάζεσθαι, dixit Eunapius de Iamblicho.

[m] Histor. Bohem. lib. iv.

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ness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant Podavivus, who waited upon his master's piety, and endeavoured to imitate his affections, began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold, till the king commanded him to follow him, and set his feet in the same footsteps, which his feet should mark for him: the servant did so, and either fancied a cure, or found one; for he followed his prince, helped forward with shame and zeal to his imitation, and by the forming footsteps for him in the snow. In the same manner does the blessed Jesus; for, since our way is troublesome, obscure, full of objection and danger, apt to be mistaken and to affright our industry, he commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood, and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath trodden down much of the difficulty, and made the way easier, and fit for our feet. For he knows our infirmities, and himself hath felt their experience in all things but in the neighbourhoods of sin; and therefore he hath proportioned a way and a path to our strengths and capacities, and, like Jacob, hath marched softly and in evenness with the children and the cattle, to entertain us by the comforts of his company, and the influences of a perpetual guide.

11. Fourthly: But we must know, that not every thing which Christ did is imitable by us; neither did he, in the work of our redemption, in all things imitate his heavenly Father. For there are some things which are issues of an absolute power, some are expresses of supreme dominion, some are actions of a judge. And therefore Jesus prayed for his enemies, and wept over Jerusalem, when at the same instant his eternal Father laughed them to scorn; for he knew that their day was coming, and himself had decreed their ruin. But it became the holy Jesus to imitate his Father's mercies; for himself was the great instrument of the eternal compassion, and was the instance of mercy; and therefore, in the operation of his Father's design, every action of his was univocal, and he showed the power of his divinity in nothing but in miracles of mercy, and illustrations of faith, by creating arguments of credibility. In the same proportion we follow Jesus, as himself followed his Father: for what he abated by the order to his intendment and design, we abate by the proportions of our nature; for some excellent acts of his were demonstrations of divinity, and an excellent grace poured forth upon him without measure was their instrument; to which proportions if we should extend our infirmities, we should crack our sinews, and dissolve the silver cords, before we could entertain the instances, and support the burden. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights; but the manner of our fastings hath been in all ages limited to the term of an artificial day; and in the primitive observations and the Jewish rites, men did eat their meal, as soon as the stars shone in the firmament. We never read that Jesus laughed, and but once, that he rejoiced in spirit; but the declensions of our natures cannot bear the weight of a perpetual grave deportment, without the intervals of refreshment and free alacrity. Our ever blessed Saviour suffered the devotion of Mary Magdalene to transport her to an expensive expression of her religion, and twice to anoint his feet with costly nard; and yet if persons, whose conditions were of no greater lustre or resplendency of fortune, than was conspicuous in his family and retinue, should suffer the same profusion upon the dressing and perfuming their bodies, possibly it might be truly said, "It might better be sold, and distributed to the poor." This Jesus received, as he was the Christ and anointed of the Lord; and by this he suffered himself to be designed to burial, and he received the oblation as eucharistical for the ejection of seven devils; for "therefore she loved much."

12. The instances are not many. For however Jesus had some extraordinary transvolations, and acts of emigration beyond the lines of his even and ordinary conversation, yet it was but seldom; for his being exemplary was of so great consideration, that he chose to have fewer instances of wonder, that he might transmit the more of an imitable virtue. And therefore we may establish this for a rule and limit of our imitations; because Christ, our Lawgiver, hath described all his Father's will in sanctions and signature of laws; whatsoever he commanded, and whatsoever he did, of precise morality, or in pursuance of the laws of nature, in that we are to trace his footsteps: and in these his laws and his practice differ but as a map and a guide, a law and a judge, a rule and a precedent. But in the special instances of action, we are to abate the circumstances, and to separate the obedience from the effect: whatsoever was moral in a ceremonial performance, that is highly imitable; and the obedience of sacrificing, and the subordination to laws actually in being, even now they are abrogated, teach us our duty, in a differing subject, upon the like reason. Jesus's going up to Jerusalem to the feasts, and his observation of the sabbaths, teach us our duty in celebration of festivals constituted by a competent and just authority. For that which gave excellency to the observation of Mosaical rites, was an evangelical duty; and the piety of obedience did not only consecrate the observations of Levi, but taught us our duty in the constitutions of christianity.

13. Fifthly: As the holy Jesus did some things, which we are not to imitate; so we also are to do some things, which we cannot learn from his example. For there are some of our duties, which presuppose a state of sin, and some suppose a violent temptation and promptness to it; and the duties of prevention, and the instruments of restitution, are proper to us, but conveyed only by precept, and not by precedent. Such are all the parts and actions of repentance, the duties of mortification and self-denial. For whatsoever the holy Jesus did, in the matter of austerity, looked directly upon the work of our redemption, and looked back only on us by a reflex act, as Christ did on Peter, when he looked him into repentance. Some states of life also there are, which Jesus never led; such are those of temporal governors, kings, and judges, merchants, lawyers,

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and the state of marriage: in the course of which lives many cases do occur, which need a precedent and the vivacity of an excellent example, especially since all the rules, which they have, have not prevented the subtilty of the many inventions which men have found out, nor made provision for all contingencies. Such persons, in all their special needs, are to govern their actions by the rules of proportion, by analogy to the holiness of the person of Jesus, and the sanctity of his institution; considering what might become a person professing the discipline of so holy a Master, and what he would have done in the like case; taking our heights by the excellence of his innocency and charity. Only remember this, that, in such cases, we must always judge on the strictest side of piety and charity, if it be a matter concerning the interest of a second person; and that, in all things, we do those actions which are farthest removed from scandal, and such as towards ourselves are severe; towards others, full of gentleness and sweetness: for so would the righteous and merciful Jesus have done. These are the best analogies and proportions. And in such cases, when the wells are dry, let us take water from a cistern, and propound to ourselves some exemplar saint, the necessities of whose life have determined his piety to the like occurrences.

14. But now, from these particulars we shall best account to what the duty of the imitation of Jesus does amount: for it signifies, that we "should walk as he walked," tread in his steps, with our hand upon the guide, and our eye upon his rule; that we should do glory to him, as he did to his Father; and that whatsoever we do, we should be careful that it do him honour, and no reproach to his institution; and then account these to be the integral parts of our duty, which are imitations of his actions or his spirit, of his rule or of his life; there being no better imitation of him, than in such actions as do him pleasure, however he hath expressed or intimated the precedent.

15. He that gives alms to the poor, takes Jesus by the hand; he that patiently endures injuries and affronts, helps him to bear his cross; he that comforts his brother in affliction, gives an amiable kiss of peace to Jesus; he that bathes his own and his neighbour's sins in tears of penance and compassion, washes his Master's feet: we lead Jesus into the recesses of our heart by holy meditations; and we enter into his heart, when we express him in our actions; for so the apostle says, "He that is in Christ, walks as he also walked."[n] But thus the actions of our life relate to him by way of worship and religion; but the use is admirable and effectual, when our actions refer to him as to our copy, and we transcribe the original to the life. He that considers, with what affections and lancinations of spirit, with what effusions of love, Jesus prayed; what fervours and assiduity, what innocency of wish, what modesty of posture, what subordination to his Father, and conformity to the Divine pleasure, were in all his devotions; is taught and excited to holy and religious prayer: the rare sweetness of his deportment in all temptations and violences of his passion, his charity to his enemies, his sharp reprehensions to the scribes and Pharisees, his ingenuity toward all men, are living and effectual sermons to teach us patience, and humility, and zeal, and candid simplicity, and justice in all our actions. I add no more instances, because all the following discourses will be prosecutions of this intendment. And the life of Jesus is not described to be like a picture in a chamber of pleasure, only for beauty, and entertainment of the eye; but like the Egyptian hieroglyphics, whose every feature is a precept, and the images converse with men by sense, and signification of excellent discourses.

16. It was not without great reason advised,[o] that every man should propound the example of a wise and virtuous personage, as Cato, or Socrates, or Brutus; and, by a fiction of imagination, to suppose him present as a witness, and really to take his life as the direction of all our actions. The best and most excellent of the old lawgivers and philosophers among the Greeks had an allay of viciousness, and could not be exemplary all over: some were noted for flatterers, as Plato and Aristippus; some for incontinency, as Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Theognis, Plato, and Aristippus again; and Socrates, whom their oracle affirmed to be the wisest and most perfect man, yet was by Porphyry noted for extreme intemperance of anger, both in words and actions: and those Romans who were offered to them for examples, although they were great in reputation, yet they had also great vices; Brutus dipped his hand in the blood of Cæsar, his prince, and his father by love, endearments, and adoption; and Cato was but a wise man all day, at night he was used to drink wine too liberally; and both he and Socrates did give their wives unto their friends;[p] the philosopher and the censor were procurers of their wives' unchastity: and yet these were the best among the gentiles. But how happy and richly furnished are christians with precedents of saints, whose faith and revelations have been productive of more spiritual graces, and greater degrees of moral perfections! And this I call the privilege of a very great assistance, that I might advance the reputation and account of the life of the glorious Jesus, which is not abated by the imperfections of human nature, as they were, but receives great heightenings and perfection from the divinity of his person, of which they were never capable.

17. Let us therefore press after Jesus, as Elisha did after his master, with an inseparable prosecution, even whithersoever he goes; that, according

[n] 1 John ii. 6.

[o] Seneca, Ep. 11.

[p] Athenagoras, lib. iii. et xiii. et Theognis de sc. Idem testantur Laertius et Lactantius. Hoc notat S. Cyrillus, lib. vi. contra Julian.

Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.—Horat. 3. 21. 11.

Majorum et sapientissimorum disciplina, Græci Socratis et Romani Catonis, qui uxores suas amicis communicaverunt, quas in matrimonium duxerant liberorum causâ, et alibi creandorum, nescio quidem an invitas: quid nam de castitate curarent, quam mariti tam facilè donaverant? O sapientiæ Atticæ, O Romanæ gravitatis exemplum! Leno est philosophus et censor.—Tertul. Apolog. c. 39.

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to the reasonableness and proportion expressed in St. Paul's advice, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we may also bear the image of the heavenly."[q] For, "In vain are we called christians, if we live not according to the example and discipline of Christ, the Father of the institution."[r] When St. Laurence was in the midst of the torments of the gridiron, he made this to be the matter of his joy and eucharist, that he was admitted to the gates through which Jesus had entered; and therefore thrice happy are they who walk in his courts all their days. And it is yet a nearer union and vicinity, to imprint his life in our souls, and express it in our exterior converse; and this is done by him only, who (as St. Prosper[s] describes the duty) despises all those gilded vanities which he despised, that fears none of those sadnesses which he suffered, that practises or also teaches those doctrines which he taught, and hopes for the accomplishment of all his promises. And this is truest religion, and the most solemn adoration.[t]

THE PRAYER.

O eternal, holy, and most glorious Jesu, who hast united two natures of distance infinite, descending to the lownesses of human nature, that thou mightest exalt human nature to a participation of the Divinity; we, thy people, that sat in darkness and in the shadows of death, have seen great light, to entertain our understandings and enlighten our souls with its excellent influences; for the excellency of thy sanctity, shining gloriously in every part of thy life, is like thy angel, the pillar of fire, which called thy children from the darknesses of Egypt. Lord, open mine eyes, and give me power to behold thy righteous glories; and let my soul be so entertained with affections and holy ardours, that I may never look back upon the flames of Sodom, but may follow thy light, which recreates and enlightens, and guides us to the mountains of safety, and sanctuaries of holiness. Holy Jesu, since thy image is imprinted on our nature by creation, let me also express thy image by all the parts of a holy life, conforming my will and affections to thy holy precepts; submitting my understanding to thy dictates and lessons of perfection; imitating thy sweetnesses and excellencies of society, thy devotion in prayer, thy conformity to God, thy zeal tempered with meekness, thy patience heightened with charity; that heart, and hands, and eyes, and all my faculties, may grow up with the increase of God, till I come to the full measure of the stature of Christ, even to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus; that at last in thy light I may see light, and reap the fruits of glory from the seeds of sanctity, in the imitation of thy holy life, O blessed and holy Saviour Jesu! Amen.

[q] 1 Cor. xv. 49.
[r] Dictum Malachiæ Abbat. apud S. Bernardum, in Vitâ S. Mal.
[s] Lib. ii. de Vita Contemplat. c. 21.
[t] Religiosissimus Cultus imitari.—LACTANT.

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THE LIFE

OF

OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

PART I.

BEGINNING AT THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, UNTIL HIS BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION, INCLUSIVELY.

SECTION I.

The History of the Conception of Jesus.

1. When the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons, the departure of the "sceptre from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet;" when the number of Daniel's years was accomplished, and the Egyptian and Syrian kingdoms had their period; God, having great compassion towards mankind, remembering his promises, and our great necessities, sent his Son into the world, to take upon him our nature, and all that guilt of sin, which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment, which was consequent to our sin: which came to pass after this manner.

2. In the days of Herod the king, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a holy maid, called Mary, espoused to Joseph, and found her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her person young, her years florid and springing, her body chaste, her mind humble, and a rare repository of divine graces. She was full of grace and excellencies; and God poured upon her a full measure of honour, in making her the mother of the Messias: for the "angel came to her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

3. We cannot but imagine the great mixture of innocent disturbances and holy passions, that, in the first address of the angel, did rather discompose her settledness, and interrupt the silence of her spirits, than dispossess her dominion, which she ever kept over those subjects, which never had been taught to rebel beyond the mere possibilities of natural imperfection. But if the angel appeared in the shape of a man, it was an unusual arrest to the blessed Virgin, who was accustomed to retirements and solitariness, and had not known an experience of admitting a comely person, but a stranger, to her closet and privacies. But if the heavenly messenger did retain a diviner form, more symbolical to angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious message, although her daily employment was a conversation with angels, who, in their daily ministering to the saints, did behold her chaste conversation, coupled with fear, yet they used not any affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were seen only by spiritual discernings. However, so it happened, that "when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind, what manner of salutation this should be."

4. But the angel, who came with designs of honour and comfort to her, not willing that the inequality and glory of the messenger should, like too glorious a light to a weaker eye, rather confound the faculty than enlighten the organ, did, before her thoughts could find a tongue, invite her to a more familiar confidence than possibly a tender virgin (though of the greatest serenity and composure) could have put on, in the presence of such a beauty and such a holiness. And "the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus."

5. The holy Virgin knew herself a person very

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unlikely to be a mother; for, although the desires of becoming a mother to the Messias were great in every of the daughters of Jacob, and about that time the expectation of his revelation was high and pregnant, and therefore she was espoused to an honest and just person of her kindred and family, and so might not despair to become a mother; yet she was a person of a rare sanctity, and so mortified a spirit, that for all this desponsation of her, according to the desire of her parents, and the custom of the nation, she had not set one step toward the consummation of her marriage, so much as in thought; and possibly had set herself back from it by a vow of chastity and holy celibate: for "Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

6. But the angel, who was a person of that nature which knows no conjunctions but those of love and duty, knew that the piety of her soul, and the religion of her chaste purposes, was a great imitator of angelical purity, and therefore perceived where the philosophy of her question did consist; and, being taught of God, declared that the manner should be as miraculous, as the message itself was glorious. For the angel told her, that this should not be done by any way, which our sin and the shame of Adam had unhallowed, by turning nature into a blush, and forcing her to a retirement from a public attesting the means of her own preservation; but the whole matter was from God, and so should the manner be: for "the angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

7. When the blessed Virgin was so ascertained, that she should be a mother[a] and a maid, and that two glories, like the two luminaries of heaven, should meet in her, that she might in such a way become the mother of her Lord, that she might with better advantages be his servant; then all her hopes and all her desires received such satisfaction, and filled all the corners of her heart so much, as indeed it was fain to make room for its reception. But she to whom the greatest things of religion, and the transportations of devotion, were made familiar, by the assiduity and piety of her daily practices, however she was full of joy, yet she was carried like a full vessel, without the violent tossings of a tempestuous passion, or the wrecks of a stormy imagination: and, as the power of the Holy Ghost did descend upon her like rain into a fleece of wool, without any obstreperous noises or violences to nature, but only the extraordinariness of an exaltation; so her spirit received it with the gentleness and tranquillity fitted for the entertainment of the spirit of love, and a quietness symbolical to the holy guest of her spotless womb, the Lamb of God; for she meekly replied, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her," having done his message. And at the same time the Holy Spirit of God did make her to conceive in her womb the immaculate Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

[a] ——— quæ ventre beato
Gaudia matris habens cum virginitatis honore,
Nec primam similem visa es, nec habere sequentem;
Sola sine exemplo placuisti fœmina Christo.—SEDUL.

Ad SECTION I.

Considerations upon the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, and the Conception of the Holy Jesus.

1. THAT which shines brightest, presents itself first to the eye; and the devout soul, in the chain of excellent and precious things which are represented in the counsel, design, and first beginnings of the work of our redemption, hath not leisure to attend the twinkling of the lesser stars, till it hath stood and admired the glory and eminencies of the Divine love, manifested in the incarnation of the Word eternal. God had no necessity, in order to the conservation or the heightening his own felicity, but out of mere and perfect charity, and the bowels of compassion, sent[b] into the world his only Son, for remedy to human miseries, to ennoble our nature by an union with Divinity, to sanctify it with his justice, to enrich it with his grace, to instruct it with his doctrine, to fortify it with his example, to rescue it from servitude, to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God, and at last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection.

2. God, who, in the infinite treasures of his wisdom and providence, could have found out many other ways for our redemption than the incarnation of his eternal Son, was pleased to choose this, not only that the remedy by man might have proportion to the causes of our ruin, whose introduction and intromission was by the prevarication of man; but also that we might with freer dispensation receive the influences of a Saviour, with whom we communicate in nature. Although Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were of greater name and current, yet they were not so salutary as the waters of Jordan to cure Naaman's leprosy. And if God had made the remedy of human nature to have come all the way clothed in prodigy, and every instant of its execution had been as terrible, affrighting, and as full of majesty, as the apparitions upon mount Sinai; yet it had not been so useful and complying to human necessities, as was the descent of God to the susception of human nature, whereby (as in all medicaments) the cure is best wrought by those instruments which have the fewest dissonances to our temper, and are the nearest to our constitution. For thus the Saviour of the world became human, alluring, full of invitation, and the sweetnesses of love, exemplary, humble, and medicinal.

3. And, if we consider the reasonableness of the thing, what can be given more excellent for the redemption of man, than the blood of the Son of God? And what can more ennoble our nature, than that

[b] Cùm inter nos et Deum discordiam peccando fecimus, tamen ad nos Deus legatum suum prior misit, ut nos ipsi, qui peccavimus, ad pacem Dei rogati veniamus.—ST. GREG.

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by the means of his holy humanity it was taken up into the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity?[b] What better advocate could we have for us, than he that is appointed to be our Judge? And what greater hopes of reconciliation can be imagined, than that God, in whose power it is to give an absolute pardon, hath taken a new nature, entertained an office, and undergone a life of poverty, with a purpose to procure our pardon? For now, though, as the righteous Judge, he will judge the nations righteously; yet, by the susception of our nature, and its appendant crimes, he is become a party; and, having obliged himself as man, as he is God he will satisfy, by putting the value of an infinite merit to the actions and sufferings of his humanity. And if he had not been God, he could not have given us remedy; if he had not been man, we should have wanted the excellency of example.

4. And till now, human nature was less than that of angels; but, by the incarnation of the Word, was to be exalted above the cherubims: yet the archangel Gabriel,[c] being despatched in embassy to represent the joy and exaltation of his inferior, instantly trims his wings with love and obedience, and hastens with this narrative to the holy Virgin. And if we should reduce our prayers to action, and do God's will on earth, as the angels in heaven do it, we should promptly execute every part of the Divine will, though it were to be instrumental to the exaltation of a brother above ourselves; knowing no end but conformity to the Divine will, and making simplicity of intention to be the fringes and exterior borders of our garments.

5. When the eternal God meant to stoop so low as to be fixed to our centre, he chose for his mother a holy person and a maid, but yet affianced to a just man, that he might not only be secure in the innocency, but also provided for in the reputation of his holy mother: teaching us, that we must not only satisfy ourselves in the purity of our purposes and hearty innocence, but that we must provide also things honest in the sight of all men, being free from the suspicion and semblances of evil; so making provision for private innocence and public honesty: it being necessary, in order to charity, and edification of our brethren, that we hold forth no impure flames or smoking firebrands, but pure and trimmed lamps, in the eyes of all the world.

6. And yet her marriage was more mysterious; for as, besides the miracle, it was an eternal honour and advancement to the glory of virginity, that he chose a virgin for his mother, so it was in that manner attempered, that the Virgin was betrothed, lest honourable marriage might be disreputed, and seem inglorious, by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour. Divers of the old doctors, from the authority of Ignatius,[d] add another reason, saying, that the blessed Jesus was therefore born of a woman betrothed, and under the pretence of marriage, that the devil, who knew the Messias was to be born of a virgin, might not expect him there, but so be ignorant of the person, till God had served many ends of providence upon him.

7. The angel, in his address, needed not to go in inquisition after a wandering fire, but knew she was a star fixed in her own orb: he found her at home; and, lest that also might be too large a circuit, she was yet confined to a more intimate retirement; she was in her oratory, private and devout. There are some curiosities so bold and determinate, as to tell the very matter of her prayer,[e] and that she was praying for the salvation of all the world, and the revelation of the Messias, desiring she might be so happy as to kiss the feet of her, who should have the glory to be his mother. We have no security of the particular; but there is no piety so diffident as to require a sign to create a belief that her employment at the instant was holy and religious; but in that disposition she received a grace, which the greatest queens would have purchased with the quitting of their diadems, and hath consigned an excellent document to all women, that they accustom themselves often to those retirements, where none but God and his angels can have admittance. For the holy Jesus can come to them too, and dwell with them, hallowing their souls, and consigning their bodies to a participation of all his glories. But recollecting of all our scattered thoughts and exterior extravagances, and a receding from the inconveniences of a too free conversation, is the best circumstance to dispose us to a heavenly visitation.

8. The holy Virgin, when she saw an angel, and heard a testimony from heaven of her grace and piety, was troubled within herself at the salutation, and the manner of it: for she had learned, that the affluence of divine comforts and prosperous successes should not exempt us from fear, but make it the more prudent and wary, lest it entangle us in a vanity of spirit; God having ordered that our spirits should be affected with dispositions in some degrees contrary to exterior events, that we be fearful in the affluence of prosperous things, and joyful in adversity; as knowing that this may produce benefit and advantage; and the changes that are consequent to the other, are sometimes full of mischiefs, but always of danger. But her silence and fear were her guardians; that, to prevent excrescences of joy; this, of vainer complacency.

9. And it is not altogether inconsiderable to observe, that the holy Virgin came to a great perfection and state of piety by a few, and those modest and even, exercises and external actions. St. Paul travelled over the world, preached to the gentiles, disputed against the Jews, confounded heretics, writ excellently learned letters, suffered dangers, injuries, affronts, and persecutions to the height of wonder, and by these violences of life, action, and patience, obtained the crown of an excellent religion

[b] Quod sperare nullus audebat: quod si fortè in mentem alicujus incidisset, poterat æstimare se in blasphemiam incurrisse.—ST. PRIMASIUS.

[c] Ἀγαθῷ δ' οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδένος οὐδέποτε ἐγγίνεται φθόνος. —HIER. in Pythag.

[d] Origen. Homil. vi. in Levit. Hier. Comment. in 1 Matth. St. Basilius, et alii.

[e] St. Bernard.

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and devotion. But the holy Virgin, although she was engaged sometimes in an active life, and in the exercise of an ordinary and small economy and government, or ministries of a family, yet she arrived to her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety, the internal actions of love, devotion, and contemplation; and instructs us, that not only those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion, or a pompous charity, or miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectual preachings, or exterior demonstrations of corporal mercy, shall have the greatest crowns, and the addition of degrees and accidental rewards; but the silent affections, the splendours of an internal devotion, the unions of love, humility, and obedience, the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God, the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meekness, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a veil and silence, make great ascents to God, and as sure progress to favour and a crown, as the more ostentous and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power or opportunities for religious perfections: a devout woman in her closet, praying with much zeal and affections for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a "shining like the stars in glory," as he who, by excellent discourses, puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my sermon, and made the ground fruitful, and the seed spring up to life eternal. Many times God is present in the still voice and private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the loud and impetuous winds, and the shining fires of more laborious and expensive actions, are profitable to others only, like a tree of balsam, distilling precious liquor for others, not for its own use.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and almighty God, who didst send thy holy angel in embassy to the blessed Virgin mother of our Lord, to manifest the actuating thine eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind by the incarnation of thine eternal Son; put me, by the assistances of thy divine grace, into such holy dispositions, that I may never impede the event and effect of those mercies which, in the counsels of thy predestination, thou didst design for me. Give me a promptness to obey thee to the degree and semblance of angelical alacrity; give me holy purity and piety, prudence and modesty, like those excellencies which thou didst create in the ever-blessed Virgin, the mother of God: grant that my employment be always holy, unmixed with worldly affections, and, as much as my condition of life will bear, retired from secular interests and disturbances; that I may converse with angels, entertain the holy Jesus, conceive him in my soul, nourish him with the expresses of most innocent and holy affections, and bring him forth and publish him in a life of piety and obedience, that he may dwell in me for ever, and I may for ever dwell with him, in the house of eternal pleasures and glories, world without end. Amen.

SECTION II.

The Bearing of Jesus in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Virgin had a faith as prompt and ready, as her body was chaste, and her soul pure; yet God, who uses to give full measure, shaken together, and running over, did, by way of confirmation, and fixing the confidence of her assent, give an instance of his omnipotency in the very particular of an extraordinary conception. For the angel said, "Behold, thy cousin Elizabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible." A less argument would have satisfied the necessity of a faith which had no scruple; and a greater would not have done it in the incredulity of an ungentle and pertinacious spirit. But the holy maid had complacency enough in the message, and holy desires about her, to carry her understanding as far as her affections, even to the fruition of the angel's message; which is such a sublimity of faith, that it is its utmost consummation, and shall be its crown, when our faith is turned into vision, our hopes into actual possessions, and our grace into glory.

2. And she, who was now full of God, bearing God in her virgin womb, and the Holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernatural and miraculous conception, arose with haste and gladness, to communicate that joy which was designed for all the world; and she found no breast to pour forth the first emanations of her overjoyed heart so fit as her cousin Elizabeth's, who had received testimony from God to have been "righteous, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," who also had a special portion in this great honour: for she was designed to be the mother of the Baptist, who was sent as a forerunner, "to prepare the ways of the Lord, and to make his paths straight. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah."

3. Her haste was in proportion to her joy and desires, but yet went no greater pace than her religion: for as in her journey she came near to Jerusalem, she turned in, that she might visit his temple, whose temple she herself was now; and there, not only to remember the pleasures of religion, which she had felt in continual descents and showers falling on her pious heart, for the space of eleven years' attendance there in her childhood, but also to pay the first fruits of her thanks and joy, and to lay all her glory at his feet, whose humble handmaid she was, in the greatest honour of being his blessed mother. Having worshipped, she went on her journey, "and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."

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4. It is not easy to imagine what a collision of joys was at this blessed meeting: two mothers of two great princes, the one the greatest that was born of woman, and the other was his Lord, and these made mothers by two miracles, met together with joy and mysteriousness; where the mother of our Lord went to visit the mother of his servant, and the Holy Ghost made the meeting festival, and descended upon Elizabeth, and she prophesied. Never, but in heaven, was there more joy and ecstasy. The persons, who were women whose fancies and affections were not only hallowed, but made pregnant and big with religion, meeting together to compare and unite their joys, and their eucharist, and then made prophetical and inspired, must needs have discoursed like seraphims and the most ecstasied order of intelligences; for all the faculties of nature were turned into grace, and expressed in their way the excellent solemnity. "For it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."

5. After they had both prophesied, and sung their hymns, and re-saluted each other with the religion of saints and the joys of angels, "Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own house." Where when she appeared with her holy burden to her husband Joseph, and that he perceived her to be with child, and knew that he had never unsealed that holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled. For, although her deportment had been pious and chaste to a miracle, her carriage reserved, and so grave, that she drave away temptations, and impure visits, and all unclean purposes from the neighbourhood of her holy person; yet when he saw she was with child, and had not yet been taught a lesson higher than the principles of nature, "he was minded to put her away," for he knew she was with child; but yet "privily," because he was a good man, and knew her piety to have been such, that it had almost done violence to his sense, and made him disbelieve what was visible and notorious, and therefore he would do it privately. "But while he thought on these things, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife."

Ad SECTION II.

Considerations concerning the Circumstances of the Interval between the Conception and Nativity.

1. WHEN the blessed Virgin was ascertained of the manner of her becoming a mother, and that her tremblings were over, upon the security she should preserve her virgin purity as a clean oblation to the honour of God, then she expressed her consent to the angelical message, and instantly she conceived the holy Jesus in her womb, by the supernatural and divine influence of the Holy Ghost. For she was highly zealous to reconcile her being mother to the Messias, with those purities and holy celibate which she had designed to keep as advantages to the interests of religion, and his honour who chose her from all the daughters of Adam, to be instrumental in the restitution of grace and innocence to all her father's family. And we shall receive benefit from so excellent example, if we be not so desirous of a privilege as of a virtue, of honour as of piety: and as we submit to the weight and pressure of sadnesses and infelicities, that God's will may be accomplished; so we must be also ready to renounce an exterior grace or favour, rather than it should not be consistent with exemplar and rare piety.

2. When the Son of God was incarnate in the womb of his virgin mother, the holy maid arose; and though she was super-exalted by an honour greater than the world yet ever saw, she still dwelt upon the foundation of humility: and to make that virtue more signal and eminent, she arose and went hastily to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who also had conceived a son in her old age: for so we all should be curious and watchful against vanities and transportations, when we are advanced to the gaieties of prosperous accidents, and in the greatest privileges descend to the lowest, to exercise a greater measure of virtue against the danger of those temptations, which are planted against our heart, to ruin our hopes and glories.

3. But the joys that the virgin mother had, were such as concerned all the world; and that part of them which was her peculiar, she would not conceal from persons apt to their entertainment, but go to publish God's mercy toward her to another holy person, that they might join in the praises of God; as knowing, that though it may be convenient to represent our personal necessities in private, yet God's gracious returns and the blessings he makes to descend on us, are more fit, when there is no personal danger collaterally appendant, to be published in the communion of saints; that the hopes of others may receive increase, that their faith may have confirmation, that their charity and eucharist may grow up to become excellent and great, and the praises of God may be sung aloud, till the sound strike at heaven, and join with the hallelujahs, which the morning stars in their orbs pay to their great Creator.

4. When the holy Virgin had begun her journey, she made haste over the mountains, that she might not only satisfy the desires of her joy by a speedy gratulation, but lest she should be too long abroad under the dispersion and discomposing of her retirements; and therefore she hastens to an enclosure, to her cousin's house, as knowing that all virtuous women, like tortoises, carry their house on their heads, and their chapel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions. And indeed her very little burden, which she bare, hindered her not but she might make haste enough; and as her

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spirit was full of cheerfulness and alacrity, so even her body was made airy and vegete: for there was no sin in her burden, to fill it with natural inconveniences: and there is this excellency in all spiritual things, that they do no disadvantage to our persons, nor retard our just temporal interests. And the religion, by which we carry Christ within us, is neither so peevish as to disturb our health, nor so sad as to discompose our just and modest cheerfulness, nor so prodigal as to force us to needs and ignoble trades; but recreates our body by the medicine of holy fastings and temperance, fills us full of serenities and complacencies, by the sweetnesses of a holy conscience and joys spiritual, promotes our temporal interests, by the gains and increases of the rewards of charity, and by securing God's providence over us, while we are in the pursuit of the heavenly kingdom. And as in these dispositions she climbed the mountains with much facility, so there is nothing in our whole life of difficulty so great, but it may be managed by those assistances we receive from the holiest Jesus, when we carry him about us; as the valleys are exalted, so the mountains are made plain before us.

5. When her cousin Elizabeth saw the mother of her Lord come to visit her, as the Lord himself descended to visit all the world in great humility, she was pleased and transported to the height of wonder and prophecy, and "the babe sprang in her womb," and was sanctified, first doing his homage and adoration to his Lord that was in presence. And we, also, although we can do nothing unless the Lord first prevent us with his gracious visitation, yet if he first come unto us, and we accept and entertain him with the expresses and correspondencies of our duty, we shall receive the grace and honour of sanctification. But if St. Elizabeth, who received testimony from God that she "walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," was carried into ecstasy, wondering at the dignation and favour done to her by the mother of her Lord; with what preparations and holy solemnities ought we to entertain his addresses to us by his holy sacrament, by the immissions of his Spirit, by the assistances of his graces, and all other his vouchsafings and descents into our hearts?

6. The blessed Virgin hearing her cousin full of spirit and prophecy, calling her blessed, and praising her faith, and confirming her joy, instantly sang her hymn to God, returning those praises, which she received, to him to whom they did appertain. For so we should worship God with all our praises, being willing upon no other condition to extend one hand to receive our own honour, but that with the other we might transmit it to God; that as God is honoured in all his creatures, so he may be honoured in us too; looking upon the graces which God hath given us, but as greater instruments and abilities to serve him, being none of ours, but talents which are intrusted into our banks to be improved. But as a precious pearl is orient and medicinal, because God hath placed those excellencies in it for ends of his own, but itself is dead to all apprehensions of it, and knows no reflections upon its own value, only God is magnified in his work; so is every pious person precious and holy, but mortified to all vainer complacencies in those singularities and eminencies, which God placed there, because he was so pleased, saying, there he would have a temple built, because from thence he would take delight to receive glory and adoration.

7. After all these holy and festival joys, which the two glad mothers feasted themselves withal, a sad cloud did intervene and passed before the face of the blessed Virgin. The just and righteous Joseph, her espoused husband, perceiving her to be with child, "was minded to put her away," as not knowing the divinity of the fountain which watered the Virgin's sealed and hallowed womb, and made it fruitful; but he purposed to do it "privily," that he might preserve the reputation of his spouse, whose piety he knew was great, and was sorrowful it should now set in a sad night, and be extinct. But it was an exemplar charity, and reads to us a rule for our deportment towards erring and lapsed persons, that we entreat them with meekness, and pity, and fear: not hastening their shame, nor provoking their spirit, nor making their remedy desperate by using of them rudely, till there be no worse thing for them to fear, if they should be dissolved into all licentiousness. For an open shame is commonly protested unto, when it is remediless, and the person either despairs and sinks under the burden, or else grows impudent,[a] and tramples upon it. But the gentleness of a modest and charitable remedy preserves that which is virtue's girdle, fear and blushing; and the beginning of a punishment chides them into the horror of remembrance and guilt, but preserves their meekness and modesty, because they, not feeling the worst of evils, dare not venture upon the worst of sins.

8. But it seems the blessed Virgin, having received this greatest honour, had not made it known to her husband Joseph; and when she went to her cousin Elizabeth, the Virgin was told of it by her cousin, before she spake of it herself, for her cousin had it by revelation and the spirit of prophecy. And it is in some circumstances and from some persons more secure to conceal visions and those heavenly gifts, which create estimations among men, than to publish them, which may possibly minister to vanity; and those exterior graces may do God's work, though no observer note them, but the person for whose sake they are sent: like rain falling in uninhabited valleys, where no eye observes showers: yet the valleys laugh and sing to God in their refreshment without a witness. However, it is better to hear the report of our good things from the mouths of others, than from ourselves: and better yet, if the beauty of the tabernacle be covered with skins, that none of our beauties be seen but by worshippers, that is, when the glory of God and the interests of religion or charity are concerned in their publication. For so it happened to be in the case of the blessed Virgin, as she related to her cousin Elizabeth; and so it hap-

[a] Frontemque à crimine sumit.

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pened not to be, as she referred to her husband Joseph.

9. The holy Virgin could not but know that Joseph would be troubled with sorrow and insecure apprehensions concerning her being with child; but such was her innocence and her confidence in God, that she held her peace, expecting which way God would provide a remedy to the inconvenience: for if we "commit ourselves to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator," preserving the tranquillity of our spirits and the evenness of our temper in the assault of infamy and disreputation, God, who loves our innocence, will be its patron, and will assert it from the scandal, if it be expedient for us: if it be not, it is not fit we should desire it. But if the holy Jesus did suffer his mother to fall into misinterpretation and suspect, which could not but be a great affliction to her excellent spirit, rarely tempered as an eye, highly sensible of every ruder touch, we must not think it strange, if we be tried and pressed with a calamity and unhandsome accidents: only remember, that God will find a remedy to the trouble, and will sanctify the affliction, and secure the person, if we be innocent, as was the holy Virgin.

10. But Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purposes, nor in making his thoughts determinate, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted it, because it was an invidious matter, and a rigour. He was, first, to have defamed and accused her publicly, and, being convicted, by the law she was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way; but he, who was a just man, that is, according to the style of Scripture and other wise writers,[b] "a good, a charitable man," found that it was more agreeable to justice to treat an offending person with the easiest sentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the person desperate, and without remedy, and provoked by the suffering of the worst of what she could fear. No obligation to justice does force a man to be cruel, or to use the sharpest sentence.[c] A just man does justice to every man, and to every thing; and then, if he be also wise, he knows there is a debt of mercy and compassion due to the infirmities of man's nature, and that debt is to be paid: and he that is cruel and ungentle to a sinning person, and does the worst thing to him, dies in his debt, and is unjust. Pity, and forbearance, and long-suffering, and fair interpretation, and excusing our brother, and taking things in the best sense, and passing the gentlest sentence, are as certainly our duty, and owing to every person that does offend, and can repent, as calling men to account can be owing to the law, and are first to be paid; and he that does not so, is an unjust person: which because Joseph was not, he did not call furiously for justice, or pretend that God required it at his hands presently, to undo a suspected person, but waved the killing letter of the law, and secured his own interest and his justice too, by intending to dismiss her privately. But, before the thing was irremediable, God ended his question by a heavenly demonstration, and sent an angel to reveal to him the innocence of his spouse, and the divinity of her Son; and that he was an immediate derivative from heaven, and the Heir of all the world. And in all our doubts we shall have a resolution from heaven, or some of its ministers, if we have recourse thither for a guide, and be not hasty in our discourses, or inconsiderate in our purposes, or rash in judgment. For God loves to give assistances to us, when we most fairly and prudently endeavour that grace be not put to do all our work, but to facilitate our labour; not creating new faculties, but improving those of nature. If we consider warily, God will guide us in the determination; but a hasty person outruns his guide, prevaricates his rule, and very often engages upon error.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesu, Son of the eternal God, thy glory is far above all heavens, and yet thou didst descend to earth, that thy descent might be the more gracious, by how much thy glories were admirable, and natural, and inseparable: I adore thy holy humanity with humble veneration, and the thankful addresses of religious joy, because thou hast personally united human nature to the eternal Word, carrying it above the seats of the highest cherubim. This great and glorious mystery is the honour and glory of man. It was the expectation of our fathers, who saw the mysteriousness of thy incarnation at great and obscure distances. And blessed be thy name, that thou hast caused me to be born after the fulfilling of thy prophecies, and the consummation and exhibition of so great a love, so great mysteriousness. Holy Jesu, though I admire and adore the immensity of thy love and condescension, who wert pleased to undergo our burdens and infirmities for us; yet I abhor myself, and detest my own impurities, which were so great, and contradictory to the excellency of God, that, to destroy sin, and save us, it became necessary that thou shouldst be sent into the world, to die our death for us, and to give us of thy life.

II.

Dearest Jesu, thou didst not breathe one sigh, nor shed one drop of blood, nor weep one tear, nor suffer one stripe, nor preach one sermon for the salvation of the devils: and what sadness and shame is it then, that I should cause so many insufferable loads of sorrows to fall upon thy sacred head! Thou art wholly given for me, wholly spent upon my uses, and wholly for every one of the elect. Thou, in the beginning of the work of our redemption, didst suffer nine months' imprisonment in the pure womb of thy holy mother, to redeem me from the eternal servitude

[b] 1 John i. 9. Psalm cxi. 3. Δικαιοσύνη, χρηστότης, ἀγαθότης, φιλανθρωπία.—PHILOSTR. de Vita Apollon. l. iii. c. 7.

[c] Non solùm ab ultionis atrocitate, sed etiam ab accusationis severitate, aliena justi persona est.—AMBROS.

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of sin, and its miserable consequents. Holy Jesu, let me be born anew, receive a new birth and a new life, imitating thy graces and excellencies, by which thou art beloved of thy Father, and hast obtained for us a favour and atonement. Let thy holy will be done by me, let all thy will be wrought in me, let thy will be wrought concerning me; that I may do thy pleasure, and submit to the dispensation of thy providence, and conform to thy holy will, and may for ever serve thee in the communion of saints, in the society of thy redeemed ones, now, and in the glories of eternity. Amen.

SECTION III.

The Nativity of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. THE holy maid longed to be a glad mother; and she who carried a burden, whose proper commensuration is the days of eternity, counted the tedious minutes, expecting when the Sun of righteousness should break forth from his bed, where nine months he hid himself as behind a fruitful cloud. About the same time, God, who in his infinite wisdom does concentre and tie together in one end things of disparity and disproportionate natures, making things improbable to co-operate to what wonder or to what truth he pleases, brought the holy Virgin to Bethlehem, the city of David, "to be taxed," with her husband Joseph, according to a decree upon all the world, issuing from Augustus Cæsar.[a] But this happened in this conjunction of time, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Micah:—"And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." This rare act of Providence was highly remarkable, because this taxing seems wholly to have been ordered by God, to serve and minister to the circumstances of this birth;[b] for this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now king, and received all the revenues of the Fiscus, and paid to Augustus an appointed tribute, after the manner of other kings, friends and relatives of the Roman empire: neither doth it appear, that the Romans laid a new tribute on the Jews, before the confiscation of the goods of Archelaus. Augustus, therefore, sending special delegates to tax every city, made only an inquest[c] after the strength of the Roman empire in men and monies; and did himself no other advantage, but was directed by Him, who rules and turns the hearts of princes, that he might, by verifying a prophecy, signify and publish the divinity of the mission and the birth of Jesus.

2. She, that had conceived by the operation of that Spirit, who dwells within the element of love, was no ways impeded in her journey by the greatness of her burden; but arrived at Bethlehem in the throng of strangers, who had so filled up the places of hospitality and public entertainment, that "there was no room" for Joseph and Mary "in the inn." But yet she felt, that it was necessary to retire, where she might softly lay her burden, who began now to call at the gates of his prison, and nature was ready to let him forth. But she, that was mother to the King of all the creatures, could find no other but a stable, a cave of a rock,[d] whither she retired; where, when it began to be with her after the manner of women, she humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers, and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculations, "brought forth her first-born into the world."

3. As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pains in the production, as the church, from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now, hath piously believed;[e] though, before his days, there were some opinions to the contrary, but certainly neither so pious, nor so reasonable. For to her alone the punishment of Eve did not extend, that "in sorrow she should bring forth:" for where nothing of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabit. For though amongst the daughters of men many conceptions are innocent and holy, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, hallowed by marriage, designed by prudence, seasoned by temperance, conducted by religion towards a just, a hallowed, and a holy end, and yet their productions are in sorrow; yet this of the blessed Virgin might be otherwise, because here sin was no relative, and neither was in the principle nor the derivative, in the act nor in the habit, in the root nor in the branch: there was nothing in this but the sanctification of the Virgin's womb, and that could not be the parent of sorrow, especially that gate not having been opened, by which the curse always entered. And as to conceive by the Holy Ghost was glorious, so to bring forth any of "the fruits of the Spirit" is joyful, and full of felicities. And he that came from his grave fast tied with a stone and signature, and into the college of apostles, "the doors being shut," and into the glories of his Father through the solid orbs of all the firmament, came also (as the church piously believes) into the world so, without doing violence to the virginal and pure body of his mother; that he did also leave her virginity entire, to be as a seal, that none might open the gate of that sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled which was

[a] Ἦν δὲ ὁν τοῦτο δεύτερον καὶ τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος τοῦ Λυγούστου βασιλείας, Αἰγύπτου δ' ὑποταγῆς καὶ τῆς τελευτῆς Ἀντωνίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας ὄγδοον ἔτος καὶ εἰκοστόν.—EUSEB. lib. i. c. 6. Histor. Eccles. Anno. scil. tertio Olympiad. 194. Cæsare Augusto et Plautio Silano Coss.

[b] Ὁ Αὔγουστος ὑπηρετεῖται τῷ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ τόκῳ διὰ τοῦ προστάγματος τῆς ἀπογραφῆς.—S. CHRYSOST. Hom. 8. in Matt.

[c] Vide Suidam in verbo ἀπογραφὴ. Dio. lib. lvi. ἔπεμψεν ἄλλους ἀλλῃ τά τε τῶν ἰδιωτῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων ἀπογραψομένους.

[d] Juxta propheticum illud, Isa. xxxiii. 16. οὗτος οἰκήσει ἐν ὑψηλῷ σπελαίῳ πέτρας ἰσχυρᾶς· ἄρτος δοθήσεται αὐτῷ, apud LXX. Sed hanc periodum Judæi eraserunt ex Hebræo textu. Sic et Symmachus, ἄρτος δοθήσεται, mysticè Bethlehem, sive Domus panis, indigitatur.

[e] Vide Waddingum, p. 270.

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spoken of the Lord by the prophet, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut." [f]

4. Although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great Prince, yet I find no story of any one that ministered at it, save only angels, who knew their duty to their Lord, and the great interests of that person; whom, as soon as he was born, they presented to his mother, who could not but receive him with a joy next to the rejoicings of glory and beatific vision, seeing him to be born her son, who was the Son of God, of greater beauty than the sun, purer than angels, more loving than the seraphim, as dear as the eye and heart of God, where he was from eternity engraven, his beloved and his only-begotten.

5. When the virgin mother now felt the first tenderness and yearnings of a mother's bowels, and saw the Saviour of the world born, poor as her fortunes could represent him, naked as the innocence of Adam, she took him, and "wrapt him in swaddling-clothes;" and after she had a while cradled him in her arms, she "laid him in a manger;" for so was the design of his humility; that as the last scene of his life was represented among thieves, so the first was amongst beasts, the sheep and the oxen; according to that mysterious hymn of the prophet Habakkuk, "His brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power." [g]

6. But this place, which was one of the great instances of his humility, grew to be as venerable as became an instrument; [h] and it was consecrated into a church, the crib into an altar, where first lay that "Lamb of God," which afterwards was sacrificed for the sins of all the world. And when Adrian, the emperor, who intended a great despite to it, built a temple to Venus and Adonis in that place, where the holy virgin mother, and her more holy Son, were humbly laid; even so he could not obtain, but that, even amongst the gentile inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, it was held in an account far above scandal and contempt. For God can ennoble even the meanest of creatures, especially if it be but a relative and instrumental to religion, higher than the injuries of scoffers and malicious persons. But it was then a temple full of religion, full of glory, when angels were the ministers, the holy Virgin was the worshipper, and Christ the Deity.

Ad SECTION III.

Considerations upon the Birth of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Jesus desired, with the ardency of an inflamed love, to be born, and to finish the work of our redemption; yet he did not prevent the period of nature, nor break the laws of the womb, and antedate his own sanctions, which he had established for ever. He stayed nine months, and then brake forth "as a giant joyful to run his course." For premature and hasty actions, and such counsels, as know not how to expect the times appointed in God's decree, are like hasty fruit, or a young person snatched away in his florid age, sad and untimely. He that hastens to enjoy his wish before the time, raises his own expectation, and yet makes it unpleasant by impatience, and loseth the pleasure of the fruition when it comes, because he hath made his desires bigger than the thing can satisfy. He that must eat an hour before his time, gives probation of his intemperance or his weakness; and if we dare not trust God with the circumstance of the event, and stay his leisure, either we disrepute the infinity of his wisdom, or give clear demonstration of our own vanity.

2. When God descended to earth, he chose to be born in the suburbs and retirement of a small town, but he was pleased to die at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; which chides our shame and pride, who are willing to publish our gaieties in piazzas, and the corners of the streets of most populous places; but our defects, and the instruments of our humiliation, we carry into deserts, and cover with the night, and hide them under ground, thinking no secrecy dark enough to hide our shame, nor any theatre large enough to behold our pompous vanities; for so we make provisions for pride, and take care to exclude humility.

3. When the holy Virgin now perceived, that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation and entrance into the world, she brought forth the holy Jesus, who, like light through transparent glass, passed through, or a ripe pomegranate from a fruitful tree, fell to the earth, without doing violence to its nurse and parent. She had no ministers to attend but angels, and neither her poverty nor her piety would permit her to provide other nurses; but herself did the offices of a tender and pious parent. She kissed him, and worshipped him, and thanked him that he would be born of her; and she suckled him, and bound him in her arms and swaddling-bands; and when she had represented to God her first scene of joy and eucharist, she softly laid him in the manger, till her desires and his own necessities called her to take him, and to rock him softly in her arms: and from this deportment she read a lecture of piety and maternal care, which mothers should perform toward their children when they are born, not to neglect any of that duty which nature and maternal piety requires.

4. Jesus was pleased to be born of a poor mother, in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of humility and poverty. And no man will have cause to complain of his coarse robe, if he remembers the swaddling-clothes of this holy Child; nor to be disquieted at his hard bed, when he considers Jesus laid in a manger; nor to be discontented at

[f] Ezek. xliv. 2.
[g] Hab. iii. 4. In medio animalium cognosceris.—Sic LXX.
[h] Ven. Beda de Locis Sanctis. c. 8. S. HIERON. epist. 48.

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his thin table, when he calls to mind, the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast-milk. But since the eternal wisdom of the Father, who "knew to choose the good, and refuse the evil," did choose a life of poverty, it gives us demonstration, that riches and honours, those idols of the world's esteem, are so far from creating true felicities, that they are not of themselves eligible in the number of good things: however, no man is to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which many wise men make vows, and of which the holy Jesus made election, and his apostles after him made public profession. And if any man will choose and delight in the affluence of temporal good things, suffering himself to be transported with caitive affections in the pleasures of every day, he may well make a question, whether he shall speed as well hereafter;[i] since God's usual method is, that they only who follow Christ here, shall be with him for ever.

5. The condition of the person who was born, is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty and a world of inconveniences, is "the Son of the living God," of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars; he is God eternal. He is also, by reason of the personal union of the Divinity with his human nature, "the Son of God;" not by adoption, as good men and beatified angels are, but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is "the heir" of his Father's glories and possessions, not by succession, (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication. He is "the express image of his Father's person," according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his Godhead being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity. And, after all this, he is our Saviour; that to our duties of wonder and adoration we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. "Verè Verbum hoc est abbreviatum," saith the prophet; the eternal Word of the Father is shortened to the dimensions of an infant.

6. Here then are concentred the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility, and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures; if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity; and in the manger, where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is God, his throne is in the heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is a man, he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is seated upon a super-exalted throne; as man, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory, at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle-bands. As God, he is encircled with millions of angels; as man, in the company of beasts. As God, he is the eternal Word of the Father, eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient, and without need; and yet he submitted himself to a condition, imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous. And this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason and our passions and capacities, upon that saying of St. Paul,—"He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed."[k]

7. Upon the consideration of these glories, if a pious soul shall, upon the supports of faith and love, enter into the stable where this great King was born, and with affections behold every member of the holy body, and thence pass into the soul of Jesus, we may see a scheme of holy meditations, enough to entertain all the degrees of our love and of our understanding, and make the mystery of the nativity as fruitful of holy thoughts, as it was of blessings to us. And it may serve instead of a description of the person of Jesus, conveyed to us in imperfect and apocryphal schemes. If we could behold his sacred feet with those affections which the holy Virgin did, we have transmitted to us those mysteries in story, which she had first in part by spiritual and divine infused light, and afterwards by observation. Those holy feet, tender, and unable to support his sacred body, should bear him over all the province of his cure, with great zeal for the gaining of souls, to the belief and obedience of his holy laws; those are the feet, that should walk upon seas and hills of water, as upon firm pavement; at which the lepers and diseased persons should stoop, and gather health up; which Mary Magdalen should wash with tears, and wipe with her hair, and anoint with costly nard, as expressions of love and adoration, and there find absolution and remedy for her sins; and which, finally, should be rent by the nails of the cross, and afterwards ascend above the heavens, making the earth to be his footstool. From hence take patterns of imitation, that our piety be symbolical, that our affections be passionate and eucharistical, full of love, and wonder, and adoration; that our feet tread in the same steps, and that we transfer the symbol into mystery, and the mystery to devotion, praying the holy Jesus to actuate the same mercies in us, which were finished at his holy feet, forgiving our sins, healing our sicknesses; and then place ourselves irremovably, becoming his disciples, and strictly observing the rules of his holy institution, "sitting at the feet" of this our great Master.

8. In the same manner a pious person may (with the blessed Virgin) pass to the consideration of his holy hands, which were so often lifted up to God in prayer; whose touch was miraculous and medicinal, cleansing lepers, restoring perishing limbs, opening

[i] Οἶει σὺ τοὺς θανόντας, ὦ Νικήρατε,
Τρυφῆς ἀπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ,
Πεφυκέναι τὸ θεῖον; DIPHILUS.

[k] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

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blind eyes, raising dead persons to life; those hands which fed many thousands, by two miracles of multiplication; that purged the temple from profaneness; that, in a sacramental manner, bare his own body, and gave it to be the food and refreshment of elect souls, and after were cloven and rent upon the cross, till the wounds became (after the resurrection) so many transparencies and glorious instruments of solemn, spiritual, and efficacious benediction. Transmit this meditation into affections and practices, "lifting up pure hands" in prayer, that our devotions be united to the merits of his glorious intercession; and putting ourselves into his hands and holy providence, let us beg those effects upon our souls and spiritual cures, which his precious hands did operate upon their bodies, transferring those similitudes to our ghostly and personal advantages.

9. We may also behold his holy breast, and consider, that there lay that sacred heart, like the dove within the ark, speaking peace to us, being the regiment of love and sorrows, the fountain of both the sacraments, running out in the two holy streams of blood and water, when the rock was smitten, when his holy side was pierced: and there, with St. John, let us lay our head, and place our heart, and thence draw a treasure of holy revelations and affections, that we may rest in him only, and upon him lay our burdens, filling every corner of our heart with thoughts of the most amiable and beloved Jesus.

10. In like manner we may unite the day of his nativity with the day of his passion, and consider all the parts of his body, as it was instrumental in all the work of our redemption; and so imitate, and in some proportion partake of, that great variety of sweetnesses, and amorous reflexes, and gracious intercourses, which passed between the blessed Virgin and the holy Child, according to his present capacities, and the clarity of that light, which was communicated to her by Divine infusion. And all the members of this blessed Child, his eyes, his face, his head, all the organs of his senses, afford variety of entertainment and motion to our affections, according as they served, in their several employments and co-operations, in the mysteries of our restitution.

11. But his body was but his soul's upper garment, and the considerations of this are as immaterial and spiritual as the soul itself, and more immediate to the mystery of the nativity. This soul is of the same nature and substance with ours; in this inferior to the angels, that of itself it is incomplete, and discursive in a lower order of ratiocination; but in this superior: 1. That it is personally united to the Divinity, full of the Holy Ghost, overrunning with grace, which was dispensed to it without measure. (And by the mediation of this union, as itself is exalted far above all orders of intelligences, so we also have contracted alliances with God, teaching us not to unravel our excellencies by infamous deportments.) 2. Here also we may meditate, that his memory is indeterminable and unalterable, ever remembering to do us good, and to present our needs to God by the means of his holy intercession. 3. That his understanding is without ignorance, knowing the secrets of our hearts, full of mysterious secrets of his Father's kingdom, in which "all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden."[1] 4. That his will is impeccable, entertained with an uninterrupted act of love to God, greater than all angels and beatified spirits present to God in the midst of the transportations and ravishments of paradise: that this will is full of love to us, of humility in itself, of conformity to God, wholly resigned by acts of adoration and obedience. It was moved by six wings; zeal of the honour of God, and compunction for our sins, pity to our miseries, and hatred of our impieties; desires of satisfying the wrath of God, and great joy at the consideration of all the fruits of his nativity; the appeasing of his Father, the redemption of his brethren. And upon these wings he mounted up into the throne of glory, carrying our nature with him above the seats of angels. These second considerations present themselves to all, that with piety and devotion behold the holy Babe lying in the obscure and humble place of his nativity.

[1] Col. ii. 3.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and immortal Jesus, I adore and worship thee, with the lowest prostrations and humility of soul and body, and give thee all thanks for that great love to us, whereof thy nativity hath made demonstrations; for that humility of thine, expressed in the poor and ignoble circumstances, which thou didst voluntarily choose in the manner of thy birth. And I present to thy holy humanity, enchased in the adorable Divinity, my body and soul; humbly desiring, that, as thou didst clothe thyself with a human body, thou mayest invest me with the robes of righteousness, covering my sins, enabling my weaknesses, and sustaining my mortality, till I shall finally, in conformity to thy beauties and perfections, be clothed with the stole of glory. Amen.

II.

Vouchsafe to come to me by a more intimate and spiritual approximation, that so thou mayest lead me to thy Father; for of myself I cannot move one step toward thee. Take me by the hand, place me in thy heart, that there I may live, and there I may die: that as thou hast united our nature to thy eternal being, thou mightest also unite my person to thine by the interior adunations of love, and obedience, and conformity. Let thy ears be open to my prayers, thy merciful eyes look upon my miseries, thy holy hands be stretched out to my relief and succour: let some of those precious distilling tears, which nature, and thy compassion, and thy sufferings, did cause to distil and drop from those sacred fontinels, water my stony heart, and make it soft, apt for the impressions of a melting, obedient, and corresponding love; and moisten mine eyes, that I may, upon thy

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stock of pity and weeping, mourn for my sins; that so my tears and sorrows, being drops of water coming from that holy Rock, may indeed be united unto thine, and made precious by such holy mixtures. Amen.

III.

Blessed Jesus, now that thou hast sanctified and exalted human nature, and made even my body precious by a personal uniting it to the Divinity, teach me so reverently to account of it, that I may not dare to profane it with impure lusts or caitive affections, and unhallow that ground, where thy holy feet have trodden. Give to me ardent desires, and efficacious prosecutions of these holy effects, which thou didst design for us in thy nativity, and other parts of our redemption: give me great confidence in thee, which thou hast encouraged by the exhibition of so glorious favours; great sorrow and confusion of face at the sight of mine own imperfections, and estrangements, and great distances from thee, and the perfections of thy soul; and bring me to thee by the strictnesses of a zealous and affectionate imitation of those sanctities, which, next to the hypostatical union, added lustre and excellency to thy humanity; that I may live here with thee in the expresses of a holy life, and die with thee by mortification and an unwearied patience; and reign with thee in immortal glories, world without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE I.

Of nursing Children, in imitation of the blessed Virgin-Mother.

1. THESE later ages of the world have declined into a softness above the effeminacy of Asian princes, and have contracted customs, which those innocent and healthful days of our ancestors knew not; whose piety was natural, whose charity was operative, whose policy was just and valiant, and whose economy was sincere, and proportionable to the dispositions and requisites of nature. And in this particular, the good women of old gave one of their instances.[a] The greatest personages nursed their own children, did the work of mothers, and thought it was unlikely women should become virtuous by ornaments and superadditions of morality, who did decline the laws and prescriptions of nature, whose principles supply us with the first and most common rules of manners and more perfect actions. In imitation of whom, and especially of the Virgin Mary, who was mother and nurse to the holy Jesus, I shall endeavour to correct those softnesses and unnatural rejections of children, which are popular up to a custom and fashion, even where no necessities of nature or just reason can make excuse.

2. And I cannot think the question despicable, and the duty of meanest consideration: although it be specified in an office of small esteem, and suggested to us by the principles of reason, and not by express sanctions of Divinity. For although other actions are more perfect and spiritual, yet this is more natural and humane; other things, being superadded to a full duty, rise higher, but this builds stronger, and is like a part of the foundation, having no lustre, but much strength; and however the others are full of ornament, yet this hath in it some degrees of necessity, and possibly is with more danger and irregularity omitted, than actions, which spread their leaves fairer, and look more gloriously.

3. First: Here I consider, that there are many sins in the scene of the body and the matter of sobriety, which are highly criminal, and yet the laws of God, expressed in Scripture, name them not; but men are taught to distinguish them by that reason, which is given us by nature, and is imprinted in our understanding, in order to the conservation of human kind. For since every creature hath something in it sufficient to propagate the kind, and to conserve the individuals from perishing in confusions and general disorders, which in beasts we call instinct, that is, an habitual or prime disposition to do certain things, which are proportionable to the end whither it is designed; man, also, if he be not more imperfect, must have the like: and because he knows and makes reflections upon his own acts, and understands the reason of it, that which in them is instinct, in him is natural reason, which is, a desire to preserve himself and his own kind; and differs from instinct, because he understands his instinct and the reasonableness of it, and they do not. But man, being a higher thing, even in the order of creation, and designed to a more noble end in his animal capacity, his argumentative instinct is larger than the natural instinct of beasts: for he hath instincts in him, in order to the conservation of society,[b] and therefore hath principles, that is, he hath natural desires to it for his own good; and because he understands them, they are called principles, and laws of nature, but are no other than what I have now declared; for beasts do the same things we do, and have many the same inclinations, which in us are the laws of nature, even all which we have in order to our common end. But that, which in beasts is nature and an impulsive force, in us must be duty and an inviting power: we must do the same things with an actual or habitual designation of that end, to which God designs beasts, (supplying by his wisdom their want of understanding,) and then, what is mere nature in them, in us is natural reason. And therefore marriage in men is made

[a] Quòd si pudica mulier in partem juvet
Domum atque dulces liberos:
(Sabina qualis, aut perusta solibus
Pernicis uxor Appuli.)
Non me Lucrina juverint conchylia
Magis, &c. HOR. Epod. ii.

[b] Naturale jus partim, τὸ δίκαιον, πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως λυσιτελίστατον· partim, τὸ πρὸς καλοκἀγαθίαν κοινὸν ἅπασι, καὶ μόνον ἱκανὸν διασώζειν τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίον. —JOSEPH. ORIG. xvi. 10.

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sacred, when the mixtures of other creatures are so merely natural, that they are not capable of being virtuous; because men are bound to intend that end which God made. And this, with the superaddition of other ends, of which marriage is representative in part, and in part effective, does consecrate marriage, and makes it holy and mysterious. But then there are in marriage many duties, which we are taught by instinct; that is, by that reason whereby we understand, what are the best means to promote the end which we have assigned us. And by these laws all unnatural mixtures are made unlawful, and the decencies which are to be observed in marriage are prescribed us by this.

4. Secondly: Upon the supposition of this discourse, I consider again, that, although to observe this instinct, or these laws of nature, (in which I now have instanced,) be no great virtue in any eminency of degree; (as no man is much commended for not killing himself, or for not degenerating into beastly lusts;) yet, to prevaricate some of these laws, may become almost the greatest sin in the world. And therefore, although to live according to nature be a testimony fit to be given to a sober and a temperate man, and rises no higher; yet, to do an action against nature is the greatest dishonour and impiety in the world, (I mean of actions whose scene lies in the body,) and disentitles us to all relations to God, and vicinity to virtue.

5. Thirdly: Now, amongst actions which we are taught by nature, some concern the being and the necessities of nature, some appertain to her convenience and advantage: and the transgressions of these respectively have their heightenings or depressions; and, therefore, to kill a man is worse than some preternatural pollutions, because more destructive of the end and designation of nature, and the purpose of instinct.

6. Fourthly: Every part of this instinct is then, in some sense, a law, when it is in a direct order to a necessary end, and by that is made reasonable. I say, in some sense it is a law; that is, it is in a near disposition to become a law. It is a rule, without obligation to a particular punishment, beyond the effect of the natural inordination and obliquity of the act; it is not the measure of a moral good or evil, but of the natural; that is, of comely and uncomely. For if, in the individuals, it should fail, or that there pass some greater obligation upon the person in order to a higher end, not consistent with those means designed in order to the lesser end, in that particular it is no fault, but sometimes a virtue. And, therefore, although it be an instinct, or reasonable towards many purposes, that every one should beget a man in his own image, in order to the preservation of nature; yet, if there be a superaddition of another and higher end, and contrary means persuaded in order to it, (such as is holy celibate, or virginity, in order to a spiritual life, in some persons,) there the instinct of nature is very far from passing obligation upon the conscience, and in that instance ceases to be reasonable. And, therefore, the Romans, who invited men to marriage with privileges, and punished morose and ungentle natures that refused it, yet had they their chaste and unmarried vestals: the first, in order to the commonwealth; these, in a nearer order to religion.

7. Fifthly: These instincts or reasonable inducements become laws, obliging us, in conscience and in the way of religion; and the breach of them is directly criminal, when the instance violates any end of justice, or charity, or sobriety, either designed in nature's first intention, or superinduced by God or man. For every thing that is unreasonable to some certain purpose, is not presently criminal, much less is it against the law of nature; (unless every man, that goes out of his way, sins against the law of nature;) and every contradicting of a natural desire or inclination is not a sin against a law of nature. For the restraining sometimes of a lawful and a permitted desire is an act of great virtue, and pursues a greater reason; as in the former instance. But those things only, against which such a reason as mixes with charity or justice, or something that is now in order to a farther end of a commanded instance of piety, may be without error brought, those things are only criminal. And God, having first our instincts reasonable, hath now made our reason and instincts to be spiritual; and having sometimes restrained our instincts, and always made them regular, he hath, by the intermixture of other principles, made a separation of instinct from instinct, leaving one in the form of natural inclination, and they rise no higher than a permission or a decency, it is lawful, or it is comely so to do: (for no man can affirm it to be a duty to kill him that assaults my life, or to maintain my children for ever without their own industry, when they are able, what degrees of natural fondness soever I have towards them; nor that I sin, if I do not marry, when I can contain:) and yet every one of these may proceed from the affections and first inclinations of nature. But until they mingle with justice, or charity, or some instance of religion and obedience, they are no laws; the other that are so mingled, being raised to duty and religion. Nature inclines us, and reason judges it apt and requisite in order to certain ends; but then every particular of it is made to be an act of religion from some other principle: as yet, it is but fit and reasonable, not religion and particular duty, till God or man hath interposed. But whatsoever particular in nature was fit to be made a law of religion, is made such by the superaddition of another principle; and this is derived to us by tradition from Adam to Noah, or else transmitted to us by the consent of all the world upon a natural and prompt reason, or else by some other instrument derived to us from God, but especially by the christian religion, which hath adopted all those things which we call "things honest, things comely, and things of good report," into a law and a duty: as appears, Phil. iv. 8.

8. Upon these propositions I shall infer, by way of instance, that it is a duty, that women should nurse their own children. For, first, it is taught to women by that instinct which nature hath im-

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planted in them. For, as Phavorinus [c] the philosopher discoursed, it is but to be half a mother to bring forth children, and not to nourish them; and it is some kind of abortion, or an exposing of the infant, which, in the reputation of all wise nations, is infamous and uncharitable. And if the name of mother be an appellative of affections and endearments, why should the mother be willing to divide it with a stranger? The earth is the mother of us all, not only because we were made of her red clay, but chiefly that she daily gives us food from her bowels and breasts; and plants and beasts give nourishment to their offsprings, after their production, with greater tenderness than they bare them in their wombs: and yet women give nourishment to the embryo, which, whether it be deformed or perfect, they know not, and cannot love what they never saw; and yet when they do see it, when they have rejoiced that a child is born, and forgotten the sorrows of production, they, who then can first begin to love it, if they begin to divorce the infant from the mother, the object from the affection, cut off the opportunities and occasions of their charity or piety.

9. For why hath nature given to women two exuberant fontinels, which, "like two roes that are twins, feed among the lilies," [d] and drop milk like dew from Hermon, and hath invited that nourishment from the secret recesses, where the infant dwelt at first, up to the breast where naturally now the child is cradled in the entertainments of love and maternal embraces; [e] but that nature, having removed the babe, and carried its meat after it, intends that it should be preserved [f] by the matter and ingredients of its constitution, and have the same diet prepared with a more mature and proportionable digestion? If nature intended them not for nourishment, I am sure it less intended them for pride and wantonness; they are needless excrescences and vices of nature, unless employed in nature's work and proper intendment. And if it be a matter of consideration, of what blood children are derived, we may also consider that the derivation continues after the birth; and therefore, abating the sensuality, the nurse is as much the mother as she that brought it forth; and so much the more, as there is a longer communication of constituent nourishment (for so are the first emanations) in this, than in the other. So that here is first the instinct, or prime intendment, of nature.

10. Secondly: And that this instinct may also become humane and reasonable, we see it by experience in many places, that foster-children are dearer to the nurse than to the mother, as receiving and ministering respectively perpetual prettinesses of love, and fondness, and trouble, and need, and invitations, and all the instruments of endearment; besides a vicinity of dispositions and relative tempers by the communication of blood and spirits from the nurse to the suckling, which makes use the more natural, and nature more accustomed. And, therefore, the affections, which these exposed or derelict children bear to their mothers, have no grounds of nature or assiduity, but civility and opinion; [g] and that little of love, which is abated from the foster-parents, upon public report that they are not natural, that little is transferred to mothers upon the same opinion, and no more. Hence come those unnatural aversions, those unrelenting dispositions, those carelessnesses and incurious deportments towards their children, which are such ill-sown seeds, from whence may arise up a bitterness of disposition and mutual provocation. The affection which children bear to their nurses, was highly remarked in the instance of Scipio Asiaticus, who rejected the importunity of his brother Africanus in behalf of the ten captains, who were condemned for offering violence to the vestals, but pardoned them at the request of his foster-sister: and being asked why he did more for his nurse's daughter than he did for his own mother's son, gave this answer; "I esteem her rather to be my mother, that brought me up, than her that bare me and forsook me." And I have read the observation, that many tyrants have killed their mothers, but never any did violence to his nurse; as if they were desirous to suck the blood of their mother raw, which she refused to give to them digested into milk. And the bastard-brother of the Gracchi, returning from his victories in Asia to Rome, presented his mother with a jewel of silver, and his nurse with a girdle of gold, upon the same account. Sometimes children are exchanged, and artificial bastardies introduced into a family, and the right heir supplanted. It happened so to Artabanus, king of Epirus. His child was changed at nurse, and the son of a mean knight succeeded in the kingdom; the event of which was this: The nurse too late discovered the treason; a bloody war was commenced; both the pretenders slain in battle; and the kingdom itself was usurped by Alexander, the brother to Olympias, the wife of Philip the Macedonian. At the best, though there happen no such extravagant and rare accidents, yet it is not likely a stranger should love the child better than the mother; and if the mother's care could suffer it to be exposed, a stranger's care may suffer it to be neglected. For how shall a hireling endure the inconveniences, the tediousnesses, and unhandsomenesses of a nursery, when she, whose natural affection might have made it pleasant, out of wantonness or softness hath declined the burden? But the sad accidents which, by too frequent observation, are daily seen happening to nurse-children, give great probation, that this intendment of nature, designing mothers to be the nurses, that their affection might secure and increase their care, and the

[c] Apud A. Gellium, l. xii. c. 1.
[d] Cant. iv. 5.
[e] Ilicet exundans claustris, erumpere gestit
Humor——
Si prohibes, furit in mammis, turbasque dolorum
Miscet, et ingratâ pœnas à matre reposcit.
SAMMARTH. Pædotroph.

[f] Sponte fluunt alimenta suis accommoda rebus,
Cognatumque bibunt membra haud invita liquorem.
IDEM.

[g] Obliteratis et abolitis nativæ pietatis elementis, quicquid ita educati liberi amare patrem atque matrem videntur, magnam partem non naturalis ille amor est, sed civilis et opinabilis.—PHAVOR. apud A. Gellium.

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care best provide for their babes, is most reasonable and proportionable to the discourses of humanity.

II. But as this instinct was made reasonable, so in this also the reason is in order to grace and spiritual effects; and therefore, is among those things which God hath separated from the common instincts of nature, and made properly to be laws, by the mixtures of justice and charity. For it is part of that education which mothers, as a duty, owe to their children, that they do, in all circumstances, and with all their powers, which God to that purpose gave them, promote their capacities and improve their faculties.[h] Now, in this also, as the temper of the body is considerable in order to the inclinations of the soul, so is the nurse in order to the temper of the body; and a lamb sucking a goat, or a kid sucking an ewe, change their fleece and hair respectively, say naturalists. For if the soul of man were put into the body of a mole, it could not see nor speak, because it is not fitted with an instrument apt and organical to the faculty; and when the soul hath its proper instruments, its music is pleasant or harsh, according to the sweetness or the unevenness of the string it touches: for David himself could not have charmed Saul's melancholic spirit with the strings of his bow, or the wood of his spear. And just so are the actions or dispositions of the soul, angry or pleasant, lustful or cold, querulous or passionate, according as the body is disposed by the various intermixes of natural qualities. And as the carelessness of nurses hath sometimes returned children to their parents crooked, consumptive, half starved, and unclean, from the impurities of nature; so their society and their nourishment together have disposed them to peevishness, to lust, to drunkenness, to pride, to low and base demeanours, to stubbornness. And as a man would have been unwilling to have had a child by Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool; so he would, in all reason, be as unwilling to have had her to be the nurse: for very often mothers by the birth do not transmit their imperfections, yet it seldom happens but the nurse does: which is the more considerable, because nurses are commonly persons of no great rank, certainly lower than the mother, and, by consequence, liker to return their children with the lower and more servile conditions; and commonly those vainer people teach them to be peevish and proud, to lie, or at least seldom give them any first principles contrariant to the nurse's vice. And, therefore, it concerns the parent's care, in order to a virtuous life of the child, to secure its first seasonings; because, whatever it sucks in first, it swallows and believes infinitely, and practises easily, and continues longest. And this is more proper for a mother's care;[i] while the nurse thinks, that giving the child suck, and keeping its body clean, is all her duty. But the mother cannot think herself so easily discharged. And this consideration is material in all cases, be the choice of the nurse never so prudent and curious; and it is not easily apprehended to be the portion of her care to give it spiritual milk, and therefore it intrenches very much upon impiety and positive relinquishing the education of their children, when mothers expose the spirit of the child either to its own weaker inclinations, or the wicked principles of an ungodly nurse, or the carelessness of any less-obliged person.

12. And then let me add, that a child sucks the nurse's milk, and digests her conditions, if they be never so bad,[k] but seldom gets any good. For virtue being superaddition to nature, and perfections not radical in the body, but contradictions to, and meliorations of, natural indispositions, does not easily convey itself by ministrations of food, as vice does; which, in most instances, is nothing but mere nature grown to custom, and not mended by grace: so that it is probable enough, such natural distemperatures may pass in the rivulets of milk, like evil spirits in a white garment, when virtues are of harder purchase, and dwell so low in the heart that they but rarely pass through the fountains of generation. And, therefore, let no mother venture her child upon a stranger, whose heart she less knows than her own. And because few of those nicer women think better of others than themselves, (since, out of self-love, they neglect their own bowels,) it is but an act of improvidence to let my child derive imperfections from one, of whom I have not so good an opinion as of myself.

13. And if those many blessings and holy prayers, which the child needs, or his askings or sicknesses, or the mother's fears or joys, respectively, do occasion, should not be cast into this account; yet those principles, which, in all cases wherein the neglect is vicious, are the causes of the exposing the child, are extremely against the piety and charity of christian religion, which prescribes severity and austere deportment, and the labours of love, and exemplar tenderness of affections, and piety to children, which are the most natural and nearest relations the parents have. That religion, which commands us to visit and to tend sick strangers, and to wash the feet of the poor, and dress their ulcers, and sends us upon charitable embassies into unclean prisons, and bids us lay down our lives for one another, is not pleased with a niceness and sensual curiosity, (that I may not name the wantonnesses of lusts,) which denies suck to our own children. What is more humane and affectionate than christianity? and what is less natural and charitable than to deny the expresses of a mother's affection? which certainly to good women is the greatest trouble in the world, and the greatest violence to their desires, if they should not express and minister.

14. And it would be considered, whether those

[h] Nam Gracchorum eloquentiæ multum contulisse accepimus Corneliam Matrem.—QUINT. l. i. c. l. Protinùs ut erit parens factus, acrem quàm maximè curam impendat, ante omnia ne sit vitiosus sermo nutricibus, quas, si fieri posset, sapientes Chrysippus optavit.—QUINT. lib. i. cap. l. Γάλα ἀλλότριον βλαβερὸν, γάλα ἴδιον ὠφέλιμον.—HIPPOC. l. de Alimento. Καθάπερ αἱ τίτθαι γε, σιτίζειε κακῶε.—ARISTOPH.

[i] Ἄλλοτε μητρυιὴ πέλει ἠμέρη, ἄλλοτε μήτηρ.—Fictum Proverb.

[k] Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres.—VIRGIL. Λεαίναε μασθὸν ἐθήλαζε.

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mothers, who have neglected their first duties of piety and charity, can expect so prompt and easy returns of duty and piety from their children, whose best foundation is love; and that love strongest, which is most natural; and that most natural, which is conveyed by the first ministries and impresses of nourishment and education. And if love descends more strongly than it ascends, and commonly falls from the parents upon the children in cataracts, and returns back again up to the parents but in gentle dews; if the child's affection keep the same proportions towards such unkind mothers, it will be as little as atoms in the sun, and never express itself but when the mother needs it not; that is, in the sunshine of a clear fortune.

15. This, then, is amongst those instincts, which are natural, heightened first by reason, and then exalted by grace into the obligation of a law; and, being amongst the sanctions of nature, its prevarication is a crime very near those sins, which divines, in detestation of their malignity, call sins against nature, and is never to be excused but in cases of necessity[1] or greater charity; as when the mother cannot be a nurse by reason of natural disability, or is afflicted with a disease, which might be transmitted in the milk; or, in case of the public necessities of a kingdom, for the securing of succession in the royal family. And yet, concerning this last, Lycurgus made a law, that the noblest amongst the Spartan women, though their kings' wives, should at least nurse their eldest son, and the plebeians should nurse all theirs; and Plutarch reports, that the second son of king Themistes inherited the kingdom in Sparta, only because he was nursed with his mother's milk, and the eldest was therefore rejected, because a stranger was his nurse. And that queens have suckled and nursed their own children, is no very unusual kindness in the simplicity and hearty affections of elder ages, as is to be seen in Herodotus and other historians. I shall only remark one instance, out of the Spanish chronicles, which Henry Stephens, in his apology for Herodotus, reports to have heard from thence related by a noble personage, Monsieur Marillac: That a Spanish lady, married into France, nursed her child with so great a tenderness and jealousy, that, having understood the little prince once to have sucked a stranger, she was unquiet, till she had forced him to vomit it up again. In other cases, the crime lies at their door, who enforce neglect upon the other, and is heightened in proportion to the motive of the omission; as, if wantonness or pride be the parent of the crime, the issue, besides its natural deformity, hath the excrescences of pride or lust to make it more ugly.

16. To such mothers I propound the example of the holy Virgin, who had the honour to be visited by an angel; yet after the example of the saints in the Old Testament, she gave to the holy Jesus drink from those bottles, which himself had filled for his own drinking; and her paps were as surely blessed for giving him suck, as her womb for bearing him: and reads a lecture of piety and charity, which if we deny to our children, there is then in the world left no argument or relation great enough to kindle it from a cinder to a flame. God gives dry breasts, for a curse to some, for an affliction to others; but those that invite it to them by voluntary arts, "love not blessing, therefore shall it be far from them." And I remember, that it was said concerning Annius Minutius the censor, that he thought it a prodigy, and extremely ominous to Rome, that a Roman lady refused to nurse her child, and yet gave suck to a puppy, that her milk might, with more safety, be dried up with artificial applications. Let none therefore divide the interests of their own children; for she that appeared before Solomon, and would have the child divided, was not the true mother, and was the more culpable of the two.

[1] Necessitas, magnum imbecillitatis humanæ patrocinium, quicquid cogit excusat.—SENEC.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal God, Father of the creatures, and King of all the world, who hast imprinted in all the sons of thy creation principles and abilities to serve the end of their own preservation, and to men hast superadded reason, making those first propensities of nature to be reasonable in order to society, and a conversation in communities and bodies politic, and hast, by several laws and revelations, directed our reasons to nearer applications to thee, and performance of thy great end, the glory of our Lord and Father; teach me strictly to observe the order of creation, and the designs of the creatures, that in my order I may do that service, which every creature does in its proper capacity. Lord, let me be as constant in the ways of religion, as the sun in his course; as ready to follow the intimations of thy Spirit, as little birds are to obey the directions of thy providence, and the conduct of thy hand. And let me never, by evil customs, or vain company, or false persuasions, extinguish those principles of morality and right reason, which thou hast imprinted in my understanding, in my creation and education, and which thou hast ennobled by the superadditions of christian institution; that I may live according to the rules of nature in such things which she teaches, modestly, temperately, and affectionately, in all the parts of my natural and political relations; and that I, proceeding from nature to grace, may henceforth go on from grace to glory, the crown of all obedience, prudent and holy walking, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SECTION IV.

Of the great and glorious Accidents, happening about the Birth of Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the birth of Christ was destitute of the usual excrescences and less necessary pomps,

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which used to signify and illustrate the birth of princes; yet his first humility was made glorious with presages, miracles, and significations from heaven, which did not only, like the furniture of a princely bed-chamber, speak the riches of the parent, or greatness of the son within its own walls, but did declare to all the world, that their prince was born, publishing it with figures and representments almost as great as its empire.

2. For, when all the world did expect, that in Judea should be born their prince, and that the incredulous world had, in their observation, slipped by their true prince, because he came not in pompous and secular illustrations; upon that very stock Vespasian[a] was nursed up in hope of the Roman empire, and that hope made him great in designs: and they being prosperous, made his fortunes correspond to his hopes, and he was endeared and engaged upon that fortune by the prophecy, which was never intended him by the prophet. But the fortune of the Roman monarchy was not great enough for this prince designed by the old prophets. And, therefore, it was not without the influence of a Divinity, that his decessor Augustus, about the time of Christ's nativity, refused to be called Lord;[b] possibly it was, to entertain the people with some hopes of restitution of their liberties, till he had griped the monarchy with a stricter and faster hold. But the christians were apt to believe, that it was upon the prophecy of a sibyl foretelling the birth of a greater prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration; and that the prince was about that time born in Judea,[c] the oracle, which was dumb to Augustus's question, told him unasked, the devil having no tongue permitted him but one to proclaim that "an Hebrew child was his Lord and enemy."

3. At the birth of which child, there was an universal peace through all the world. For then it was, that Augustus Cæsar,[d] having composed all the wars of the world, did, the third time, cause the gates of Janus's temple to be shut; and this peace continued for twelve years, even till the extreme old age of the prince, until rust had sealed the temple doors, which opened not till the sedition of the Athenians, and the rebellion of the Dacians, caused Augustus to arm. For he that was born was the Prince of peace, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his brother; and to make, by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of a holy doctrine, such happy atonements between disagreeing natures, such confederations and societies between enemies, that "the wolf and the lamb should lie down together, and a little child," boldly, and without danger, "put his finger in the nest and cavern of an asp."[e] And it could be no less than miraculous, that so great a body as the Roman empire, consisting of so many parts, whose constitutions were differing, their humours contrary, their interests contradicting each other's greatness, and all these violently oppressed by an usurping power, should have no limb out of joint, not so much as an aching tooth, or a rebelling humour, in that huge collection of parts; but so it seemed good in the eye of Heaven, by so great and good a symbol, to declare not only the greatness, but the goodness, of the Prince, that was then born in Judea, the Lord of all the world.

4. But because the heavens, as well as the earth, are his creatures, and do serve him, at his birth he received a sign in heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were "keeping watch over their flocks by night," near that part where Jacob did use to feed his cattle, when he was in the land of Canaan, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Needs must the shepherds be afraid, when an angel came arrayed in glory, and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their senses and scatter their understandings. But "the angel said unto them, Fear not; for I bring unto you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The shepherds needed not be invited to go see this glorious sight; but, lest their fancy should rise up to an expectation of a prince as externally glorious as might be hoped for upon the consequence of so glorious an apparition, the angel, to prevent the mistake, told them of a sign, which, indeed, was no other than the thing signified; but yet was therefore a sign, because it was so remote from the common probability and expectation of such a birth, that, by being a miracle, so great a prince should be born so poorly, it became an instrument to signify itself, and all the other parts of mysterious consequence. For the angel said, "This shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapt in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger."

5. But as light, when it first begins to gild the east, scatters indeed the darknesses from the earth, but ceases not to increase its flame, till it hath made perfect day; so it happened now, in this apparition of the angel of light: he appeared and told his message, and did shine, but the light arose higher and higher, till midnight was as bright as mid-day. For "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host;" and after the angel had told his message in plain song, the whole chorus joined in descant, and sang an hymn to the tune and sense of heaven, where glory is paid to God in eternal and never-ceasing offices, and whence good will descends upon men in perpetual and never-stopping torrents. Their song was, "Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men:" by this song not only referring to the strange peace,[f] which at that time put all the world in ease; but to the great peace, which this

[a] Sueton. in Vita Vesp. Vide etiam Ciceron. de Divin.
[b] Orosius, l. vi. c. 22. [c] Suidas in Histor. Verb. Augustus.
[d] Orosius. [e] Isa. xi. 6, 8.
[f] Igitur eo tempore, *i. e.* eo anno, quo firmissimam verissimamque pacem ordinatione Dei Cæsar composuit, natus est Christus; cujus adventui pax ista famulata est: in cujus ortu audientibus hominibus exsultantes angeli cecinerunt, "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax," &c.—P. OROSIUS.

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new-born Prince should make between his Father and all mankind.

6. As soon as these blessed choristers had sung their Christmas carol, and taught the church a hymn to put into her offices for ever in the anniversary of this festivity, "the angels returned into heaven," and "the shepherds went to Bethlehem, to see this thing, which the Lord had made known unto them. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." Just as the angel had prepared their expectation, they found the narrative verified, and saw the glory and the mystery of it by that representment, which was made by the heavenly ministers, seeing God through the veil of a child's flesh, the heir of heaven wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and a person, to whom the angels did minister, laid in a manger; and they beheld, and wondered, and worshipped.

7. But as precious liquor warmed and heightened by a flame, first crowns the vessel, and then dances over its brim into the fire, increasing the cause of its own motion and extravagancy; so it happened to the shepherds, whose hearts being filled with the oil of gladness up unto the brim, the joy ran over, as being too big to be confined in their own breasts, and did communicate itself, growing greater by such dissemination. For "when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying, which was told them concerning this child. And," as well they might, "all that heard it, wondered." But Mary, having first changed her joy into wonder, turned her wonder into entertainments of the mystery, and the mystery into fruition and cohabitation with it: for "Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart." And the shepherds having seen what the angels did upon the publication of the news, which less concerned them than us, had learnt their duty, to sing an honour to God for the nativity of Christ: for "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

8. But the angels had told the shepherds, that the nativity was "glad tidings of great joy unto all people;" and, that "the heavens might declare the glory of God, and the firmament show his handy work," this also was told abroad, even to the gentiles, by a sign from heaven, by the message of a star. For there was a prophecy of Balaam, famous in all the eastern country, and recorded by Moses,[g] "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel: out of Jacob shall come he, that shall have dominion." Which although in its first sense it signified David, who was the conqueror of the Moabites; yet, in its more mysterious and chiefly intended sense, it related to the Son of David. And, in expectation of the event of this prophecy,[h] the Arabians, the sons of Abraham by Keturah, whose portion given by their patriarch was gold, frankincense, and myrrh, who were great lovers of astronomy, did with diligence expect the revelation of a mighty prince in Judea at such time, when a miraculous and extraordinary star should appear. And therefore, "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men," inspired by God, taught by art, and persuaded by prophecy, "from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him." The Greeks suppose this, which was called a star, to have been, indeed, an angel in a pillar of fire, and the semblance of a star; and it is made the more likely, by coming and standing directly over the humble roof of his nativity, which is not discernible in the station of a star, though it be supposed to be lower than the orb of the moon. To which, if we add, that they only saw it, (so far as we know,) and that it appeared, as it were, by voluntary periods, it will not be very improbable but that it might be like the angel, that went before the sons of Israel in a pillar of fire by night; or rather, like the little shining stars sitting upon the bodies of Probus, Tharacus, and Andronius, martyrs, when their bodies were searched for in the days of Dioclesian, and pointed at by those bright angels.

9. This star did not trouble Herod, till the Levantine princes expounded the mysteriousness of it, and said it declared a "king to be born in Jewry," and that the star was his, not applicable to any signification but of a king's birth. And therefore, although it was no prodigy nor comet,[i] foretelling diseases, plagues, war, and death, but only the happy birth of a most excellent prince; yet it brought affrightment to Herod and all Jerusalem: for "when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." And thinking that the question of the kingdom was now in dispute, and an heir sent from heaven to lay challenge to it, who brought a star and the learning of the East with him, for evidence and probation of his title, Herod thought there was no security to his usurped possession, unless he could rescind the decrees of Heaven, and reverse the results and eternal counsels of predestination. And he was resolved to venture it, first by craft, and then by violence.

10. And first, "he calls the chief priests and scribes of the people together, and demanded of them, where Christ should be born;" and found, by their joint determination, that Bethlehem of Judea was the place, designed by ancient prophecy and God's decree. Next, he inquired of the wise men concerning the star, but privily, what time it appeared. For the star had not motion certain and regular,[k] by the laws of nature; but it so guided the wise men in their journey, that it stood when they stood, moved not when they rested, and went forward when they were able, making no more haste than they did, who carried much of the business

[g] Num. xxiv. 17.
[h] Epiphan. in Expos Fid. Cath. c. 8.

[i] Et terris mutantem regna cometem.—CHALCIDIUS in Timæum Platonis.
[k] Leo Serm. 4. de Epiphan.

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and employment of the star along with them. But when Herod was satisfied in his questions, "he sent them to Bethlehem," with instructions "to search diligently for the young child, and to bring him word," pretending that he would "come and worship him also."

11. The wise men prosecuted the business of their journey, and "having heard the king, they departed; and the star" (which, as it seems, attended their motion) "went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was;" where "when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Such a joy as is usual to wearied travellers, when they are entering into their inn; such a joy as when our hopes and greatest longings are laying hold upon the proper objects of their desires, a joy of certainty immediately before the possession: for that is the greatest joy which possesses before it is satisfied, and rejoices with a joy not abated by the surfeits of possession, but heightened with all the apprehensions and fancies of hope, and the neighbourhood of fruition; a joy of nature, of wonder, and of religion. And now their hearts laboured with a throng of spirits and passions, and ran into the house, to the embracement of Jesus, even before their feet: but "when they were come into the house, they saw the young child, with Mary his mother." And possibly their expectation was something lessened, and their wonder heightened, when they saw their hope empty of pomp and gaiety, the great King's throne to be a manger, a stable to his chamber of presence, a thin court, and no ministers, and the King himself a pretty babe; and, but that he had a star over his head, nothing to distinguish him from the common condition of children, or to excuse him from the miseries of a poor and empty fortune.

12. This did not scandalize those wise persons; but, being convinced by that testimony from Heaven, and the union of all circumstances, "they fell down and worshipped him," after the manner of the Easterlings, when they do veneration to their kings; not with an empty Ave, and gay blessing of fine words, but "they bring presents, and come into his courts:" for, "when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh." And if these gifts were mysterious, beyond the acknowledgment of him to be the King of the Jews, and Christ, that should come into the world; frankincense might signify him to be acknowledged a God, myrrh to be a man, and gold to be a king: unless we choose by gold to signify the acts of mercy; by myrrh, the chastity of minds, and purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is especially instrumental; and by incense we intend our prayers,[m] as the most apt presents and oblations to the honour and service of this young King. But however the fancies of religion may represent variety of ideas, the act of adoration was direct and religious, and the myrrh was medicinal to his tender body; the incense possibly no more than was necessary in a stable, the first throne of his humility; and the gold was a good antidote against the present indigencies of his poverty: presents such as were used in all the Levant, (especially in Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frankincense were proper,) in their addresses to their God and to their King; and were instruments with which, under the veil of flesh, they worshipped the eternal Word; the wisdom of God, under infant innocency; the almighty power, in so great weakness; and under the lowness of human nature, the altitude of majesty and the infinity of Divine glory. And so was verified the prediction of the prophet Esay,[n] under the type of the son of the prophetess, "Before a child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, he shall take the spoil of Damascus and Samaria from before the king of Assyria."

13. When they had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, "being warned in their sleep by an angel, not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way;" where, having been satisfied with the pleasures of religion, and taught by that rare demonstration which was made by Christ, how man's happiness did nothing at all consist in the affluence of worldly possessions, or the tumours of honour; having seen the eternal Son of God poor and weak, and unclothed of all exterior ornaments; they renounced the world, and retired empty into the recesses of religion, and the delights of philosophy.

Ad SECTION IV.

Considerations upon the Apparition of the Angels to the Shepherds.

1. WHEN the angels saw that come to pass, which Gabriel, the great ambassador of God, had declared; that which had been prayed for and expected four thousand years; and that, by the merits of this newborn Prince, their younger brethren and inferiors in the order of intelligent creatures were now to be redeemed, that men should partake the glories of their secret habitations, and should fill up those void places, which the fall of Lucifer and the third part of the stars had made, their joy was as great as their understanding; and these mountains did leap with joy, because the valleys were filled with benediction, and a fruitful shower from heaven. And if, at the conversion of one sinner, there is jubilation, and a festival kept among the angels, how great shall we imagine this rejoicing to be, when salvation and redemption was sent to all the world! But we also, to whom the joy did more personally relate, (for they rejoiced for our sakes,) should learn to estimate the grace done us, and believe there is something very extraordinary in the piety and salvation of a man, when the angels, who in respect of us are unconcerned in the communica-

[l] S. Ambros. in ii. Lu. 6. Leo, Ser. de Epiph. Theophil. in Matt. ii. S. Bernard. in Serm. 2. de Epiph.
[m] Phil. iv. 18. Ps. cxli. 2. Rev. v. 8.
[n] Isa. viii. 4. Justin. M. Dial. cum Tryphon. Tertul. lib. iii. contra Marcion. c. 13.

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tions, rejoice with the joy of conquerors, or persons suddenly ransomed from tortures and death.

2. But the angels also had other motions: for besides the pleasures of that joy, which they had in beholding human nature so highly exalted, and that God was man, and man was God; they were transported with admiration at the ineffable counsel of God's predestination, prostrating themselves with adoration and modesty, seeing God so humbled, and man so changed, and so full of charity, that God stooped to the condition of man, and man was inflamed beyond the love of seraphim, and was made more knowing than cherubim, more established than thrones, more happy than all the orders of angels. The issue of this consideration teaches us to learn their charity, and to exterminate all the intimations and beginnings of envy, that we may as much rejoice at the good of others as of ourselves: for then we love good for God's sake, when we love good wherever God hath placed it; and that joy is charitable, which overflows our neighbours' fields, when ourselves are unconcerned in the personal accruments; for so we are "made partakers of all that fear God," when charity unites their joy to ours, as it makes us partakers of their common sufferings.

3. And now the angels, who had adored the holy Jesus in heaven, come also to pay their homage to him upon earth; and laying aside their flaming swords, they take into their hands instruments of music, and sing, "Glory be to God on high." First, signifying to us, that the incarnation of the holy Jesus was a very great instrument of the glorification of God; and those divine perfections in which he is chiefly pleased to communicate himself to us, were in nothing manifested so much as in the mysteriousness of this work. Secondly: And in vain doth man satisfy himself with complacencies and ambitious designs upon earth, when he sees before him God in the form of a servant, humble, and poor, and crying, and an infant full of need and weakness.

4. But God hath pleased to reconcile his glory with our eternal benefit; and that also was part of the angels' song, "In earth peace to men of good will." For now we need not, with Adam, to fly from the presence of the Lord, saying, "I heard thy voice, and I was afraid, and hid myself;" for he, from whom our sins made us once to fly, now weeps, and is an infant in his mother's arms, seeking strange means to be reconciled to us; hath forgotten all his anger, and is swallowed up with love, and encircled with irradiations of amorous affections and good will: and the effects of this good will are not referred only to persons of heroical and eminent graces and operations, of vast and expensive charities, of prodigious abstinencies, of eremitical retirements, of ascetical diet, of perfect religion, and canonized persons; but to all "men of good will," whose souls are hallowed with holy purposes and pious desires, though the beauties of the religion and holy thoughts were not spent in exterior acts, nor called out by the opportunities of a rich and expressive fortune.

5. But here we know where the seat and regiment of peace is placed, and all of it must pass by us and descend upon us, as duty and reward. It proceeds from the Word incarnate, from the Son of God, undertaking to reconcile us to his Father; and it is ministered and consigned unto us by every event and act of Providence, whether it be deciphered in characters of paternal indulgence, or of correction, or absolution. For that is not peace from above, to have all things according to our human and natural wishes; but to be in favour with God, that is peace; always remembering, that to be chastised by him is not a certain testimony of his mere wrath, but to all his servants a character of love and of paternal provision, since "he chastises every son whom he receives." Whosoever seeks to avoid all this world's adversity, can never find peace; but he only who hath resolved all his affections, and placed them in the heart of God; he who denies his own will, and hath killed self-love, and all those enemies within, that make afflictions to become miseries indeed, and full of bitterness; he only enjoys this peace: and in proportion to every man's mortification and self-denial, so are the degrees of his peace. And this is the peace which the angel proclaimed at the enunciation of that birth, which taught humility, and contempt of things below, and all their vainer glories, by the greatest argument in the world, even the poverty of God incarnate. And if God sent his own, natural, only-begotten, and beloved Son, in all the dresses of poverty and contempt; that person is vain, who thinks God will love him better than he loved his own Son, or that he will express his love any other or gentler way, than to make him partaker of the fortune of his eldest Son. There is one other postern to the dwellings of peace, and that is, "good will to men;" for so much charity as we have to others, such a measure of peace also we may enjoy at home: for peace was proclaimed only to "men of good will," to them that are at peace with God and all the world.

6. But the angel brought the message to shepherds, to persons simple, and mean, and humble; persons likely to be more apprehensive of the mystery, and less of the scandal, of the poverty of the Messias: for they whose custom or affections dwell in secular pomps, who are not used by charity or humility to stoop to an evenness and consideration of their brethren of equal natures, though of unequal fortunes, are persons, of all the world, most indisposed and removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, especially when they do not come clothed with advantages of the world, and of such beauties which they admire. God himself in poverty, comes in a prejudice to them that love riches, and simplicity is folly to crafty persons;[a] a

[a] At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus, atque
Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare. Probus quis
Nobiscum vivit? multùm est demissus homo. Illi
Tardo, cognomen pingui damus———
Simplicior si quis———ut fortè legentem
Aut tacitum impellat quovis sermone? molestus!
Communi sensu planè caret, inquimus.
HORAT. Serm. l. i. Sat. 3.

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mean birth is an ignoble stain, beggary is a scandal, and the cross an unanswerable objection. But the angel's moral in the circumstance of his address, and inviting the poor shepherds to Bethlehem, is, that none are fit to come to Christ but those, who are poor in spirit, despisers of the world, simple in their hearts, without craft and secular designs; and therefore neither did the angel tell the story to Herod, nor to the scribes and Pharisees, whose ambition had ends contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of Jesus.

7. These shepherds when they conversed with angels, were "watching over their flocks by night;" no revellers, but in a painful and dangerous employment, the work of an honest calling, securing their folds against incursions of wild beasts, which in those countries are not seldom or unfrequent. And Christ being the great Shepherd, (and possibly, for the analogy's sake, the sooner manifested to shepherds,) hath made his ministers overseers of their flocks, distinguished in their particular folds, and conveys the mysteriousness of his kingdom, first to the pastors, and by their ministry, to the flocks. But although all of them be admitted to the ministry, yet those only to the interior recesses and nearer imitations of Jesus, who are watchful over their flocks, assiduous in their labours, painful in their sufferings, present in the dangers of the sheep, ready to interpose their persons and sacrifice their lives; these are shepherds, who first converse with angels, and finally shall enter into the presence of the Lord. But, besides this symbol, we are taught in the significations of the letter, that he that is diligent in the business of an honest calling, is then doing service to God; and a work so pleasing to him, who hath appointed the sons of men to labour, that to these shepherds he made a return and recompence, by the conversation of an angel; and hath advanced the reputation of an honest and a mean employment to such a testimony of acceptance, that no honest person, though busied in meaner offices, may ever hereafter, in the estimation of Christ's disciples, become contemptible.

8. The signs, which the angel gave to discover the babe, were no marks of lustre and vanity; but they should find, 1. a babe, 2. swaddled, 3. lying in a manger: the first a testimony of his humility; the second, of his poverty; the third, of his incommodity and uneasiness; for Christ came to combat the whole body of sin, and to destroy every province of Satan's kingdom; for these are direct antinomies to "the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Against the first, Christ opposed his hard and uneasy lodging; against the second, the poorness of his swaddling-bands and mantle; and the third is combated by the great dignation and descent of Christ, from a throne of majesty to the state of a sucking babe. And these are the first lessons he hath taught us for our imitation; which that we may the better do, as we must take him for our pattern, so also for our helper, and pray to the holy Child, and he will not only teach us, but also give us power and ability.

[a] Tit. ii. 11.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesu, at whose birth the quires of angels sang praises to God, and proclaimed peace to men, sanctify my will and inferior affections; make me to be within the conditions of peace, that I be holy and mortified, a despiser of the world and exterior vanities, humble and charitable: that by thy eminent example I may be so fixed in the designs and prosecution of the ends of God and a blissful eternity, that I be unmoved with the terrors of the world, unaltered with its allurements and seductions, not ambitious of its honour, not desirous of its fulness and plenty; but make me diligent in the employment thou givest me, faithful in discharge of my trust, modest in my desires, content in the issues of thy providence; that in such dispositions I may receive and entertain visitations from heaven, and revelations of the mysteries and blisses evangelical; that by such directions I may be brought into thy presence, there to see thy beauties and admire thy graces, and imitate all thy imitable excellencies, and rest in thee for ever; in this world, by the perseverance of a holy and comfortable life, and in the world to come, in the participation of thy essential glories and felicities, O blessed and eternal Jesu!

Considerations of the Epiphany of the Blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi.

1. GOD, who is the universal Father of all men, at the nativity of the Messias gave notice to it of all the world, as they were represented by the grand division of the Jews and gentiles; to the Jewish shepherds by an angel, to the Eastern magi by a star. For the gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined within the limits of a national prerogative, but catholic and diffused. As God's love was, so was the dispensation of it, "without respect of persons:" for all, being included under the curse of sin, were to him equal and indifferent, undistinguishable objects of mercy. And Jesus, descended of the Jews, was also "the expectation of the gentiles," and therefore communicated to all: the grace of God being like the air we breathe; and "it hath appeared to all men,"[a] saith St. Paul; but the conveyances and communications of it were different, in the degrees of clarity and illustration. The angel told the shepherds the story of the nativity plainly and literally; the star invited the wise men by its rareness and supernatural apparition; to which also, as by a footpath, they had been led by the prophecy of Balaam.

2. But here first the grace of God prevents us; without him we can do nothing; he lays the first stone in every spiritual building, and then expects, by that strength he first gave us, that we make the superstructures. But as a stone, thrown into a

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river, first moves the water, and disturbs its surface into a circle, and then its own force wafts the neighbouring drops into a larger figure by its proper weight; so is the grace of God the first principle of our spiritual motion; and when it moves us into its own figure, and hath actuated and ennobled our natural powers by the influence of that first incentive, we continue the motion, and enlarge the progress. But as the circle on the face of the waters grows weaker, till it hath smoothed itself into a natural and even current, unless the force be renewed or continued; so does all our natural endeavour, when first set a-work by God's preventing grace, decline to the imperfection of its own kind, unless the same force be made energetical and operative, by the continuation and renewing of the same supernatural influence.

3. And therefore the Eastern magi, being first raised up into wonder and curiosity by the apparition of the star, were very far from finding Jesus by such general and indefinite significations; but then the goodness of God's grace increased its own influence; for an inspiration from the Spirit of God admonished them to observe the star, showed the star, that they might find it, taught them to acknowledge it,[b] instructed them to understand its purpose, and invited them to follow it, and never left them till they had found the holy Jesus. Thus also God deals with us. He gives us the first grace, and adds the second; he enlightens our understandings, and actuates our faculties, and sweetly allures us by the proposition of rewards, and wounds us with the arrows of his love, and inflames us with fire from heaven; ever giving us new assistances, or increasing the old, refreshing us with comforts, or arming us with patience; sometimes stirring our affections by the lights held out to our understanding, sometimes bringing confirmation to our understanding by the motion of our affections, till, by variety of means, we at last arrive at Bethlehem, in the service and entertainments of the holy Jesus; which we shall certainly do, if we follow the invitations of grace and exterior assistances, which are given us to instruct us, to help us, and to invite us, but not to force our endeavours and co-operations.

4. As it was an unsearchable wisdom, so it was an unmeasurable grace of providence and dispensation, which God did exhibit to the wise men; to them, as to all men, disposing the ministries of his grace sweetly, and by proportion to the capacities of the person suscipient. For God called the gentiles by such means, which their customs and learning had made prompt and easy. For these magi were great philosophers and astronomers, and therefore God sent a miraculous star, to invite and lead them to a new and more glorious light, the lights of grace and glory. And God so blessed them in following the star, to which their innocent curiosity and national customs were apt to lead them, that their custom was changed to grace, and their learning heightened with inspiration; and God crowned all with a spiritual and glorious event. It was not much unlike, which God did to the princes and diviners among the Philistines, who sent the ark back with five golden emrods and five golden mice; an act proportionable to the custom and sense of their nation and religion; yet God accepted their opinion and divination to the utmost end they designed it, and took the plagues of emrods and mice from them. For oftentimes the custom or the philosophy of the opinions of a nation are made instrumental, through God's acceptance, to ends higher than they can produce by their own energy and intendment. And thus the astrological divinations of the magi were turned into the order of a greater design than the whole art could promise, their employment being altered into grace, and nature into a miracle. But then, when the wise men were brought by this means, and had seen Jesus, then God takes ways more immediate and proportionable to the kingdom of grace; the next time, God speaks to them by an angel. For so is God's usual manner, to bring us to him; first, by ways agreeable to us; and then to increase, by ways agreeable to himself. And when he hath furnished us with new capacities, he gives new lights, in order to more perfect employments: and, "To him that hath, shall be given full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over;" the eternal kindness of God being like the sea, which delights to run in its old channel, and to fill the hollownesses of the earth, which itself hath made, and hath once watered.

5. This star, which conducted the wise men to Bethlehem, (if, at least, it was properly a star, and not an angel,) was set in its place to be seen by all; but was not observed, or not understood, nor its message obeyed, by any but the three wise men. And indeed no man hath cause to complain of God, as if ever he would be deficient in assistances necessary to his service; but first the grace of God separates us from the common condition of incapacity and indisposition, and then we separate ourselves one from another by the use or neglect of this grace; and God doing his part to us, hath cause to complain of us, who neglect that which is our portion of the work. And, however even the issues and the kindnesses of God's predestination and antecedent mercy do very much toward the making the grace to be effective of its purpose, yet the manner of all those influences and operations being moral, persuasive, reasonable, and divisible, by concourse of various circumstances, the cause and the effect are brought nearer and nearer, in various suscipients; but not brought so close together, but that God expects us to do something towards it;[c] so that we may say, with St. Paul, "It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me." And at the same time, when, by reason of our co-operation, we actuate and improve God's grace, and become distinguished from other persons more negligent under the same opportunities, God is he who also does

[b] Dedit intellectum qui præstitit signum.—S. LEO, Ser. 1. de Epiph.

[c] ——'Αλλ' ὅταν
Σπεύδῃ τις, αὐτὸς χὠ θεὸς συνάπτεται.
Ὡς τοῖς θανοῦσι χρήματ' οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ.—ÆSCHYL. Pers.

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distinguish us by the proportions and circumstantiate applications of his grace to every singular capacity; that we may be careful not to neglect the grace, and yet to return the entire glory to God.[d]

6. Although God, to second the generous design of these wise personages in their inquiry after the new prince, made the star to guide them through the difficulties of their journey; yet when they came to Jerusalem, the star disappeared; God so resolving to try their faith, and the activity of their desires; to demonstrate to them that God is the Lord of all his creatures, and a voluntary dispenser of his own favours, and can as well take them away as indulge them; and to engage them upon the use of ordinary means and ministries, when they are to be had: for now the extraordinary and miraculous guide for a time did cease; that they, being at Jerusalem, might inquire of them, whose office and profession of sacred mysteries did oblige them to publish the Messias. For God is so great a lover of order,[e] so regular and certain an exactor of us to use those ordinary ministries of his own appointing, that he, having used the extraordinary but as architects do frames of wood, to support the arches till they be built, takes them away when the work is ready, and leaves us to those other of his designation; and hath given such efficacy to these, that they are as persuasive and operative as a miracle; and St. Paul's sermon would convert as many, as if Moses should rise from the grave. And now the doctrines of christianity have not only the same truth, but the same evidence and virtue also, they had in the midst of those prime demonstrations, extraordinary by miracle and prophecy, if men were equally disposed.

7. When they were come to the doctors of the Jews, they asked confidently, and with great openness, under the ear and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and so gave evidence of their faith, of their magnanimity, and fearless confidence and profession of it, and of their love of the mystery and object, in pursuance of which they had taken so troublesome and vexatious journeys: and besides that, they upbraided the tepidity and infidel baseness of the Jewish nation, who stood unmoved and unconcerned by all the circumstances of wonder, and stirred not one step to make inquiry after, or to visit, the new-born King; they also teach us to be open and confident in our religion and faith, and not to consider our temporal, when they once come to contest against our religious, interests.

8. The doctors of the Jews told the wise men where Christ was to be born; the magi, they address themselves with haste to see him and to worship, and the doctors themselves stir not; God not only serving himself with truth, out of the mouths of impious persons, but magnifying the recesses of his counsel, and wisdom, and predestination; who uses the same doctrine to glorify himself and to confound his enemies, to save the scholars and to condemn the tutors, to instruct one and upbraid the other; making it an instrument of faith, and a conviction of infidelity: the sermons of the doctors, in such cases, being like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silk-worms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasions of their own nakedness, and the causes of their death. But as it is a demonstration of the Divine wisdom, so it is of human folly; there being no greater imprudence in the world, than to do others' advantage, and to neglect our own.[f] If thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee: but if thou be like a channel in a garden, through which the water runs to cool and moisten the herbs, but nothing for its own use; thou buildest a fortune to them upon the ruins of thine own house, while, "after thy preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a castaway."

9. When the wise men departed from Jerusalem, the star again appeared, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy: and, indeed, to new converts, and persons in their first addresses to the worship of God, such spiritual and exterior comforts are often indulged; because then God judges them to be most necessary, as being invitations to duty by the entertainments of our affections with such sweetnesses, which represent the glory of the reward, by the antepasts and refreshments dispensed even in the ruggedness of the way, and incommodities of the journey. All other delights are the pleasures of beasts, or the sports of children; these are the antepasts, and preventions of the full feasts and overflowings of eternity.

10. When they came to Bethlehem, and the star pointed them to a stable, they entered in; and being enlightened with a divine ray, proceeding from the face of the holy Child, and seeing through the cloud, and passing through the scandal of his mean lodging and poor condition, they bowed themselves to the earth; first giving themselves an oblation to this great King, then they made offering of their gifts; for a man's person is first accepted, then his gift. God first regarded Abel, and then accepted his offering: which we are best taught to understand by the present instance; for it means no more, but that all our outward services and oblations are made acceptable by the prior presentation of an inward sacrifice. If we have first presented ourselves, then our gift is pleasant, as coming but to express the truth of the first sacrifice; but if our persons be not first made a holocaust to God, the lesser oblations of outward presents are like sacrifices without salt and fire, nothing to make them pleasant or religious. For all other senses of this proposition charge upon God the distinguishing and acceptation of persons, against which he solemnly protests: God regards no man's person, but according to the doing of his

[d] Θεοῦ δὲ δῶρόν ἐστιν ἐντυχεῖν βροτούς.—ÆSCHYL. ἐκτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβ.

[e] Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστιν ἀυτῇ καὶ τὸ εἶναι σοφίᾳ, τὸ ἐν τάξει καὶ τελειότητι προάγειν τὴν ποίησιν· ὥστε συνεισιέναι ἀλλήλαις σοφιαν, καὶ τάξιν, καὶ τελειότητα.—HIEROCL.

[f] Piaga mortale che ui non può guarire,
Vivere in altrui, et in se stesso morire.

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duty; but then God is said first to accept the person, and then the gift, when the person is first sanctified and given to God by the vows and habits of a holy life; and then all the actions of his religion are homogeneal to their principle, and accepted by the acceptation of the man.

11. These magi presented to the holy Babe gold, frankincense, and myrrh, protesting their faith of three articles by the symbolical oblation; by gold, that he was a king; by incense, that he was a God; by myrrh, that he was a man. And the presents also were representative of interior virtues: the myrrh signifying faith, mortification, chastity, compunction, and all the actions of the purgative way of spiritual life; the incense signifying hope, prayer, obedience, good intention, and all the actions and devotions of the illuminative; the giving the gold representing love to God and our neighbours, the contempt of riches, poverty of spirit, and all the eminences and spiritual riches of the unitive life. And these oblations if we present to the holy Jesus, both our persons and our gifts shall be accepted, our sins shall be purged, our understandings enlightened, and our wills united to this holy Child, and entitled to a communion of all his glories.

12. And thus, in one view and two instances, God hath drawn all the world to himself by his Son Jesus, in the instance of the shepherds and the Arabian magi, Jews and gentiles, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; that in him all nations, and all conditions, and all families, and all persons, might be blessed;[g] having called all by one star or other, by natural reason, or by the secrets of philosophy; by the revelations of the gospel, or by the ministry of angels; by the illuminations of the Spirit, or by the sermons and dictates of spiritual fathers: and hath consigned this lesson to us, that we must never appear before the Lord empty, offering gifts to him, by the expenses or by the affections of charity; either the worshipping or the oblations of religion, either the riches of the world or the love of the soul: for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Arabians, we may, with the poor shepherds, come and "kiss the Son, lest he be angry;" and in all cases come and "serve him with fear and reverence," and spiritual rejoicings.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy Jesu, thou art the glory of thy people Israel, and a light to the gentiles, and wert pleased to call the gentiles to the adoration and knowledge of thy sacred person and laws, communicating the inestimable riches of thy holy discipline to all, with an universal undistinguishing love; give unto us spirits docible, pious, prudent, and ductile, that no motion or invitation of grace be ineffectual, but may produce excellent effects upon us, and the secret whispers of thy Spirit may prevail upon our affections, in order to piety and obedience, as certainly as the loudest and most clamorous sermons of the gospel. Create in us such excellencies, as are fit to be presented to thy glorious Majesty; accept of the oblation of myself, and my entire services: but be thou pleased to verify my offering, and secure the possession to thyself, that the enemy may not pollute the sacrifice, or divide the gift, or question the title; but that I may be wholly thine, and for ever, clarify my understanding, sanctify my will, replenish my memory with arguments of piety; then shall I present to thee an oblation rich and precious, as the treble gift of the Levantine princes. Lord, I am thine, reject me not from thy favour, exclude me not from thy presence: then shall I serve thee all the days of my life, and partake of the glories of thy kingdom in which thou reignest gloriously and eternally. Amen.

[g] Nam simul terris animisque duri,
Et suâ Bessi nive duriores,
Nunc oves facti, duce te, gregantur
Pacis in aulam.
Nox ubi quondam fuerat ferarum,
Nunc ibi ritus viget angelorum,
Et latet Justus quibus ipse latro
Vixit in antris.
S. PAULINUS in Reditu Nicetæ.

[a] Ὃς ποθ' ἑῆς πάτρης ἐξήγαγε δῖον Ἀβραάμ,
Αὐτὸς ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν κίλετ' ἀνέρα παντὶ σὺν οἴκῳ
Σάρκ' ἀποσυλῆσαι πόσθης ἄπο· καὶ β' ἐτέλεσσεν
EUSEB. l. ix. c. 22. Præpar. Evangel.

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SECTION V.

Of the Circumcision of Jesus, and his Presentation in the Temple.

1. AND now the blessed Saviour of the world began to do the work of his mission and our redemption: and because man had prevaricated all the Divine commandments, to which all human nature respectively to the persons of several capacities was obliged, and therefore the whole nature was obnoxious to the just rewards of its demerits; first, Christ was to put that nature he had assumed into a savable condition, by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually, by suffering the just deservings of its prevarications. He therefore addresses himself to all the parts of an active obedience; "and when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child," he exposed his tender body to the sharpness of the circumcising stone, and shed his blood in drops, giving an earnest of those rivers, which he did afterwards pour out for the cleansing all human nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God.

2. He that had no sin, nor was conceived by natural generation, could have no adherences to his soul or body, which needed to be pared away by a rite, and cleansed by a mystery; neither, indeed, do we find it expressed, that circumcision[a] was ordained for the abolition or pardon of original sin, (it is indeed presumed so,) but it was instituted to be a seal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and

Abraham's posterity, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," and therefore was not improper for him to suffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the Prince of the covenant, and "the Author and Finisher of that faith" which was consigned to Abraham in circumcision. But so mysterious were all the actions of Jesus, that this one served many ends. For, 1. It gave demonstration of the verity of human nature. 2. So he began to fulfil the law. 3. And took from himself the scandal of uncircumcision, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews against his entertainment and communion. 4. And then he took upon him that name, which declared him to be the Saviour of the world; which, as it was consummate in the blood of the cross, so it was inaugurated in the blood of circumcision: for "when the eight days were accomplished for circumcising of the Child, his name was called Jesus."

3. But this holy family, who had laid up their joys in the eyes and heart of God, longed, till they might be permitted an address to the temple, that there they might present the holy Babe unto his Father; and indeed that he, who had no other, might be brought to his own house. For although, while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was the Lord of the place: it was his Father's house, and he was "the Lord of all." And therefore, "when the days of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord," to whom he was holy, as being the first-born; the "first-born of his mother," the "only-begotten Son of his Father," and "the first-born of every creature." And they "did with him according to the law of Moses, offering a pair of turtle doves" for his redemption.

4. But there was no public act about this holy Child, but it was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary. And, at this instant, the Spirit of God directed a holy person into the temple, that he might feel the fulfilling of a prophecy made to himself, that he might, before his death, "behold the Lord's Christ," and embrace "the glory and consolation of Israel, and the light of the gentiles," in his arms: for old "Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God," and prophesied, and spake glorious things of that Child, and things sad and glorious concerning his mother; that the "Child was set for the rising and falling of many in Israel, for a sign that should be spoken against:" and the bitterness of that contradiction should pierce the heart of the holy virgin-mother like a sword, that her joy at the present accidents might be attempered with present revelation of her future trouble, and the excellent savour of being the mother of God might be crowned with the reward of martyrdom, and a mother's love be raised up to an excellency great enough to make her suffer the bitterness of being transfixed with his love and sorrow as with a sword.

5. But old Anna, the prophetess, came also in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her long prayers and fasting in the temple: the long-looked-for redemption of Israel was now in the temple, and she saw with her eyes the Light of the World, the Heir of Heaven, the long-looked-for Messias, whom the nations had desired and expected, till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dim, with looking farther, and apprehending greater distances. She also prophesied, "and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him."

Ad SECTION V.

Considerations upon the Circumcision of the holy Child Jesus.

1. WHEN eight days were come, the holy Jesus was circumcised, and shed the first fruits of his blood; offering them to God, like the prelibation of a sacrifice, and earnest of the great seas of effusion designed for his passion, not for the expiation of any stain himself had contracted; for he was spotless as the face of the sun, and had contracted no wrinkle from the aged and polluted brow of Adam: but it was an act of obedience, and yet of choice and voluntary susception, to which no obligation had passed upon him in the condition of his own person. For, as he was included in the verge of Abraham's posterity, and had put on the common outside of his nation, his parents had intimation enough to pass upon him the sacrament of the national covenant, and it became an act of excellent obedience: but because he was a person extraordinary, and exempt from the reasons of circumcision, and himself in person was to give period to the rite, therefore it was an act of choice in him, and in both the capacities becomes a precedent of duty to us; in the first, of obedience; in the second, of humility.

2. But it is considerable, that the holy Jesus, who might have pleaded his exemption, especially in a matter of pain and dishonour, yet chose that way, which was more severe and regular; so teaching us to be strict in our duties, and sparing in the rights of privilege and dispensation. We pretend every indisposition of body to excuse us from penal duties, from fasting, from going to church; and instantly we satisfy ourselves with saying, "God will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" so making ourselves judges of our own privileges, in which commonly we are parties against God, and therefore likely to pass unequal sentence. It is not an easy argument, that will bring us to the severities and rigours of duty; but we snatch at occasions of dispensation, and therefore possibly may mistake the justice of the opportunities by the importunities of our desires. However, if this too much easiness be, in any case, excusable from sin, yet, in all cases, it is an argument of infirmity; and the regular observation of the commandment is the surer way to perfection. For not every inconvenience of body is fit to be pleaded against the inconvenience of losing spiritual advantages, but only such, which upon prudent account does intrench upon the laws of charity; or such, whose consequent is likely to be impediment

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of a duty in a greater degree of loss, than the present omission. For the spirit being in many perfections more eminent than the body, all spiritual improvements have the same proportions; so that, if we were just estimators of things, it ought not to be less than a great incommodity to the body, which we mean to prevent by the loss of a spiritual benefit, or the omission of a duty: he were very improvident, who would lose a finger for the good husbandry of saving a ducat; and it would be an unhandsome excuse from the duties of repentance, to pretend care of the body. The proportions and degrees of this are so nice, and of so difficult determination, that men are more apt to untie the girdle of discipline with the loose hands of dispensation and excuse, than to strain her too hard by the strictures and bindings of severity; but the error were the surer on this side.

3. The blessed Jesus refused not the signature of this bloody covenant, though it were the character of a sinner; and did sacramentally rescind the impure reliques of Adam, and the contractions of evil customs; which was the greatest descent of humility that is imaginable, that he should put himself to pain to be reckoned amongst sinners, and to have their sacraments and their protestations, though his innocence was purer than the flames of cherubim. But we use arts to seem more righteous than we are, desiring rather to be accounted holy, than to be so; as thinking the vanity of reputation more useful to us, than the happiness of a remote and far distant eternity. But if (as it is said) circumcision was ordained, besides the signing of the covenant, to abolish the guilt of original sin, we are willing to confess that; it being no act of humiliation to confess a crime, that all the world is equally guilty of, that could not be avoided by our timeliest industry, and that serves us for so many ends in the excuse and minoration of our actual impieties: so that, as Diogenes trampled upon Plato's pride with a greater fastuousness and humorous ostentation; so we do with original sin, declaim against it bitterly, to save the others harmless, and are free in the publication of this, that we may be instructed how to conceal the actual. The blessed Jesus had in him no principle of sin, original nor actual; and therefore this designation of his, in submitting himself to the bloody covenant of circumcision, which was a just express and sacramental abscission of it, was an act of glorious humility; yet our charging of ourselves so promptly with Adam's fault, whatever truth it may have in the strictness of theology, hath (forsitan) but an ill end in morality; and so I now consider it, without any reflection upon the precise question.

4. For though the fall of Adam lost to him all those supernatural assistances, which God put into our nature by way of grace; yet it is by accident, that we are more prone to many sins than we are to virtue. Adam's sin did discompose his understanding and affections; and every sin we do, does still make us more unreasonable, more violent, more sensual, more apt still to the multiplication of the same or the like actions: the first rebellion of the inferior faculties against the will and understanding, and every victory the flesh gets over the spirit, makes the inferior insolent, strong, tumultuous, domineering, and triumphant, upon the proportionable ruins of the spirit, blinding our reason and binding our will; and all these violations of our powers are increased by the perpetual ill customs, and false principles, and ridiculous guises of the world; which make the later ages to be worse than the former,[a] unless some other accident do intervene, to stop the ruin and declension of virtue; such as are God's judgments, the sending of prophets, new imposition of laws, messages from heaven, diviner institutions, such as in particular was the great discipline of christianity. And even in this sense here is origination enough for sin, and impairing of the reasonable faculties of human souls, without charging our faults upon Adam.

5. But besides this, God, who hath propounded to man glorious conditions, and designed him to an excellent state of immortality, hath required of him such a duty, as shall put man to labour, and present to God a service of a free and difficult obedience. For therefore God hath given us laws, which come cross and are restraints to our natural inclinations, that we may part with something in the service of God which we value. For although this is nothing in respect of God, yet to man it is the greatest he can do. What thanks were it to man to obey God in such things, which he would do, though he were not commanded? But to leave all our own desires, and to take up objects of God's propounding, contrary to our own, and desires against our nature, this is that, which God designed as a sacrifice of ourselves to him. And, therefore, God hath made many of his laws to be prohibitions in the matter of natural pleasure, and restraints of our sensitive appetite. Now, this being become the matter of Divine laws, that we should, in many parts and degrees, abstain from what pleases our senses, by this supervening accident it happens, that we are very hardly weaned from sin, but most easily tempted to a vice. And then we think we have reason to lay the fault upon original sin, and natural aversation from goodness, when this inclination to vice is but accidental, and occasional upon the matter and sanction of the laws. Our nature is not contrary to virtue, for the laws of nature and right reason do not only oblige us, but incline us to it;[b] but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross to our nature, that is, to our natural appetites; by reason of which it comes to pass, that (as St. Paul says) "we are by nature the children of wrath;"[c] meaning, that, by our natural inclinations, we are disposed to contradict those laws which lay fetters upon them, we are

[a] Τοὺς παλαιοὺς καὶ ἐγγὺς θεῶν γεγονότας, βελτίστους τε ὄντας φύσει, καὶ τὸν ἄριστον ἐζηκότας βίον, ὡς χρυσοῦν γένος νομίζεσθαι.—PORPHYR. lib. iv. de non Esu Animalium.

[b] Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι ἐνοσιούμενος ὅρκος, μὴ παραβαίνειν ὑπ' ἀυτῶν [Θεοῦ] διορισθέντας νόμους. —HIEROC.

[c] Ephes. ii 3.

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apt to satisfy the lusts of the flesh; for in these he there instances.

6. But in things intellectual and spiritual, where neither the one nor the other satisfy the sensual part, we are indifferent to virtue or to vice; and, when we do amiss, it is, wholly, and in all degrees, inexcusably our own fault. In the old law, when it was a duty to swear by the God of Israel in solemn causes, men were apt enough to swear by him only; and that sometimes the Israelites did swear by the queen of heaven, it was by the ill example and desires to comply with the neighbour nations, whose daughters they sometimes married, or whose arms they feared, or whose friendship they desired, or with whom they did negociate. It is indifferent to us to love our fathers, and to love strangers, according as we are determined by custom or education. Nay, for so much of it as is natural and original, we are more inclined to love them than to disrepute them; and if we disobey them, it is when any injunction of theirs comes cross to our natural desires and purposes. But if, from our infancy, we be told concerning a stranger, that he is our father, we frame our affections to nature, and our nature to custom and education, and are as apt to love him who is not, and yet is said to be, as him who is said not to be, and yet indeed is, our natural father.

7. And in sensual things, if God had commanded polygamy or promiscuous concubinate, or unlimited eatings and drinkings, it is not to be supposed but that we should have been ready enough to have obeyed God in all such impositions: and the sons of Israel never murmured, when God bade them borrow jewels and ear-rings, and spoil the Egyptians. But because God restrained these desires, our duties are the harder, because they are fetters to our liberty, and contradictions to those natural inclinations, which also are made more active by evil custom and unhandsome educations. From which premises we shall observe, in order to practice, that sin creeps upon us in our education so tacitly and undiscernibly,[d] that we mistake the cause of it, and yet so prevalently and effectually, that we judge it to be our very nature, and charge it upon Adam, to lessen the imputation upon us, or to increase the license or the confidence, when every one of us is the Adam, the "man of sin," and the parent of our own impurities. For it is notorious, that our own iniquities do so discompose our naturals, and evil customs and examples do so encourage impiety, and the law of God enjoins such virtues, which do violence to nature, that our proclivity to sin is occasioned by the accident, and is caused by ourselves; whatever mischief Adam did to us, we do more to ourselves.[e] We are taught to be revengeful in our cradles, and are taught to strike our neighbour, as a means to still our frowardness, and to satisfy our wranglings. Our nurses teach us to know the greatness of our birth, or the riches of our inheritance; or they learn us to be proud, or to be impatient, before they learn us to know God, or to say our prayers. And then, because the use of reason comes at no definite time, but insensibly and divisibly, we are permitted such acts with impunity too long; deferring to repute them to be sins, till the habit is grown strong, natural, and masculine. And because from the infancy it began in inclinations, and tender overtures, and slighter actions, Adam is laid in the fault, and original sin did all: and this clearly we therefore confess,[f] that our faults may seem the less, and the misery be pretended natural, that it may be thought to be irremediable, and therefore we not engaged to endeavour a cure; so that the confession of our original sin is no imitation of Christ's humility in suffering circumcision, but too often an act of pride, carelessness, ignorance, and security.

8. At the circumcision, his parents imposed the holy name told to the Virgin by the angel, "his name was called Jesus;" a name above every name. For, in old times, God was known by names of power, of nature, of majesty. But his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy by the mediation and ministry of his holy Son. And because God gave to the holy Babe the name, in which the treasures of mercy were deposited, and exalted "this name above all names," we are taught that the purpose of his counsel was, to exalt and magnify his mercy above all his other works; he being delighted with this excellent demonstration of it, in the mission, and manifestation, and crucifixion, of his Son; he hath changed the ineffable name into a name utterable by man, and desirable by all the world; the majesty is all arrayed in robes of mercy, the tetragrammaton,[g] or adorable mystery of the patriarchs, is made fit for pronunciation and expression, when it becometh the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God clothed with circumstances of facility, and opportunities of approximation. The great and highest

[d] Non enim nos tarditatis natura damnavit, sed ultrà nobis quod oportebat indulsimus: ità non tam ingenio nos illi superárunt quàm proposito.—QUINCTIL.

Δεινοκράτης φησὶν, ἐυδαίμονα εἶναι τὸν τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα σπουδαίαν, ταύτην γὰρ ἑκάστῳ εἶναι δαίμονα.—ARIST. ii. Top. c. 3.

Ἡράκλειτος ἔφη, ὡς ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων.—STOB. Serm. 250.

[e] ——————— Denique teipsum
Concute, numque tibi vitiorum inseverit olim
Natura, aut etiam consuetudo mala: namque
Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris.
HORAT.

Antè palatum eorum quàm os instituimus. Gaudemus, si quid licentiùs dixerint. Verba ne Alexandrinis quidem permittenda deliciis risu et osculo excipimus. Fit ex his consuetudo, deinde natura. Discunt hæc miseri, antequam sciunt vitia esse.—QUINCTIL. lib. i. c. 2.

Tanta est corruptela malæ consuetudinis, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur à natura dati, exorianturque et confirmentur contraria vitia.—CICERO, 3. T. Q. 2.

[f] Εἰώθασι γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὐχ οὕτως ἐπαινεῖν καὶ τιμᾶν τοὺς ἐκ τῶν πατέρων τῶν εὐδοκιμούντων γεγονότας, ὡς τοὺς ἐκ τῶν δυσκόλων καὶ χαλεπῶν, ἥπερ φαίνονται μηδὲν ὅμοιοι τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὄντες.—ISOCRATES EP. Timoth.

[g] Nomen enim Jesu Hebraicè prolatum nihil aliud est nisi Τετραγράμματον vocatum per Schin. Videat, cui animus est, multa de mysterio hujus nominis apud Galatinum. Ad eundem sensum fuit vaticinium Sibyllæ:

Δὴ τότε γὰρ μεγάλοιο Θεοῦ τοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν
Ἥξει σαρκοφόρος, ξυνητοῖς ὁμοιούμενος ἐν γῇ,
Τέσσαρα φωνήεντα φέρων, τὸ δ' ἄφωνον ἐν αὐτῷ.

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name of God could not be pronounced truly, till it came to be finished with a guttural, that made up the name given by this angel to the holy Child; nor God received or entertained by men, till he was made human and sensible, by the adoption of a sensitive nature, like vowels pronunciable by the intertexture of a consonant. Thus was his person made tangible, and his name utterable, and his mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made explicate, at the circumcision of this holy Babe.

9. But now God's mercy was at full sea, now was the time when God made no reserves to the effusion of his mercy. For to the patriarchs, and persons of eminent sanctity and employment in the elder ages of the world, God, according to the degrees of his manifestation or present purpose, would give them one letter of this ineffable name. For the reward, that Abraham had in the change of his name, was, that he had the honour done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it; and so had Joshua, when he was a type of Christ, and the prince of the Israelitish armies: and when God took away[h] one of these letters, it was a curse. But now he communicated all the whole name to this holy Child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that he was the glory of God, "the express image of his Father's person," God eternal; and then manifested to the world in his humanity, that all the intelligent world, who expected beatitude, and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, might find them all, with ample returns, in this name of Jesus, which God "hath exalted above every name," even above that, by which God, in the Old Testament, did represent the greatest awfulness of his majesty. This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments, the nightly rites of sorcerers, the secrets of Memphis, the drugs of Thessaly, the silent and mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldees, and the spells of Zoroastres. This is the name, at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction: at the mention of this name, the blessed apostles, and Hermione, the daughter of St. Philip, and Philotheus, the son of Theophila, and St. Hilarion, and St. Paul the Eremite, and innumerable other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles: "Signs and wonders and healings were done by the name of the holy Child Jesus." This is the name, which we should engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion; it being that name, whereby God and God's mercies are made presential to us, and proportionate objects of our religion and affections.

[h] Isa. xxi. 11. in casu Idumeæ; Duma vocatur, dempto H.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy and ever blessed Jesu, who art infinite in essence, glorious in mercy, mysterious in thy communications, affable and presential in the descents of thy humanity; I adore thy glorious name, whereby thou hast shut up the abysses, and opened the gates of heaven, restraining the power of hell, and discovering and communicating the treasures of thy Father's mercies. O Jesu, be thou a Jesus unto me, and save me from the precipices and ruins of sin, from the expresses of thy Father's wrath, from the miseries and insufferable torments of accursed spirits, by the power of thy majesty, by the sweetnesses of thy mercy, and sacred influences and miraculous glories of thy name. I adore and worship thee in thy excellent obedience and humility, who hast submitted thy innocent and spotless flesh to the bloody covenant of circumcision. Teach me to practise so blessed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble, and obedient to thy sacred laws, severe and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and spirit, of circumcised heart and tongue; that what thou didst represent in symbol and mystery, I may really express in the exhibition of an exemplar, pious, and mortified life, cutting off all excrescences of my spirit, and whatsoever may minister to the flesh, or any of its ungodly desires; that now thy holy name is called upon me, I may do no dishonour to the name, nor scandal to the institution, but may do thee honour and worship, and adorations of a pure religion, O most holy and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE II.

Of the Virtue of Obedience.

1. THERE are certain excellencies, either of habit or consideration, which spiritual persons use to call general ways; being a dispersed influence into all the parts of good life, either directing the single actions to the right end, or managing them with right instruments, and adding special excellencies and formalities to them, or morally inviting to the repetition of them. But they are like the general medicaments in physic, or the prime instruments in mathematical disciplines: such as are the consideration of the Divine presence, the example of Jesus, right intention; and such also is the virtue of obedience, which perfectly unites our actions to God, and conforms us to the Divine will, which is the original of goodness; and sanctifies and makes a man an holocaust to God, which contains in it eminently all other graces, but especially those graces, whose essence consists in a conformity of a part or the whole (such are faith, humility, pa-

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tience, and charity); which gives quietness and tranquillity to the spirit, and is an antepast of Paradise (where their jubilee is the perpetual joys of obedience, and their doing is the enjoying the Divine pleasure); which adds an excellency and lustre to pious actions, and hallows them which are indifferent, and lifts up some actions from their unhallowed nature, to circumstances of good and of acceptation. If a man says his prayers, or communicates out of custom, or without intuition of the precept and Divine commandment, the act is like a ship returning from her voyage without her venture and her burden, as unprofitable as without stowage. But if God commands us either to eat or to abstain, to sleep or to be waking, to work or to keep a sabbath; these actions, which are naturally neither good nor evil, are sanctified by the obedience, and ranked amongst actions of the greatest excellency. And this also was it which made Abraham's offer to kill his son, and the Israelites' spoiling the Egyptians, to become acts laudable, and not unjust: they were acts of obedience, and therefore had the same formality and essence with actions of the most spiritual devotions. God's command is all our rule for practice; and our obedience, united to the obedience of Jesus, is all our title to acceptance.

2. But by obedience, I do not here mean the exterior execution of the work; for so, obedience is no grace, distinct from the acting any or all the commandments: but besides the doing of the thing, (for that also must be presupposed,) it is a sacrifice of our proper will to God, a choosing the duty, because God commands it. For beasts also carry burdens, and do our commands, by compulsion; and the fear of slaves, and the rigour of task-masters, made the number of bricks to be completed, when Israel groaned, and cried to God for help. But sons, that labour under the sweet paternal regiment of their fathers, and the influence of love, they love the precept, and do the imposition, with the same purposes and compliant affections, with which the fathers made it. When Christ commanded us to renounce the world, there were some, that did think it was a hard saying, and do so still; and the young rich man forsook him upon it: but Ananias and Sapphira, upon whom some violences were done by custom, or the excellent sermons of the apostles, sold their possessions too; but it was so against their will, that they retained part of it. But St. Paul did not only forsake all his secular fortunes, but "counted all to be dross, that he might gain Christ;" he gave his will, made an offertory of that, as well as of his goods, choosing the act which was enjoined. This was the obedience the holy Jesus paid to his heavenly Father, so voluntary, that it was "meat to him to do his Father's will."[a]

3. And this was intended always by God, "My son, give thy heart;" and particularly by the holy Jesus: for, in the saddest instance of all his precepts, even that of suffering persecution, we are commanded to "rejoice, and to be exceeding glad." And so did those holy martyrs, in the primitive ages, who upon just grounds, when God's glory, or the edification of the church, had interest in it,[b] offered themselves to tyrants, and dared the violence of the most cruel and bowelless hangmen. And this is the best oblation we can present to God. "To offer gold,[c] is a present fit to be made by young beginners in religion, not by men in christianity; yea, Crates the Theban threw his gold away, and so did Antisthenes: but to offer our will to God, to give ourselves, is the act of an apostle, the proper act of christians." And therefore, when the apostles made challenge of a reward for leaving all their possessions, Christ makes no reply to the instance, nor says, "You who have left all;" but, "You who have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel:" meaning, that the quitting the goods was nothing; but the obedience to Christ, that they followed Jesus in the regeneration, going themselves in pursuit of him, and giving themselves to him, that was it which entitled them to a throne.

4. And this, therefore, God enjoins, that our offerings to him may be entire and complete; that we pay him a holocaust; that we do his work without murmuring; and that his burden may become easy, when it is borne up by the wings of love and alacrity of spirit. For, in effect, this obedience of the will is, in true speaking and strict theology, nothing else but that charity, which gives excellency to alms, and energy to faith, and acceptance to all graces. But I shall reduce this to particular and more minute considerations.

5. First: We shall best know, that our will is in the obedience, by our prompt undertaking,[d] by our cheerful managing, by our swift execution; for all degrees of delay are degrees of immorigerousness and unwillingness. And since time is extrinsical to the act, and alike to every part of it, nothing determines an action but the opportunity without, and the desires and willingness within. And therefore he who deliberates beyond his first opportunity, and exterior determination and appointment of the act, brings fire and wood, but wants a lamb for the sacrifice; and unless he offer up his Isaac, his beloved will, he hath no ministry prepared for God's acceptance. He that does not repent to-day, puts it to the question, whether he will repent at all or no. He that defers restitution, when all the circumstances are fitted, is not yet resolved upon the duty. And when he does it, if he does it against his will, he does but do honorary penance with a paper upon his hat, and a taper in his hand; it may satisfy the law, but not satisfy his conscience; it neither pleases himself, and less pleases

[a] John iv. 34. [b] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Licin. Hispan.
[c] Idem in Matt. xix. 28.
[d] Fidelis obediens nescit moras, fugit crastinum, ignorat tarditatem, præcipit præcipientem, parat oculos visui, aures auditui, linguam voci, manus operi, itineri pedes: totum se colligit, ut imperantis colligat voluntatem.—S. BERNARD. Serm. de Obedient.
Et barbaris cunctatio servilis, statim exsequi regium.—TACIT. lib. vi. Annal. 32.

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God. A sacrifice without a heart was a sad and ominous presage in the superstition of the Roman augurs, and so it is in the service of God; for what the exhibition of the work is to man, that the presentation of the will is to God. It is but a cold charity to a naked beggar to say, "God help thee," and do nothing; give him clothes, and he feels your charity. But God, who is the searcher of the heart, his apprehension of actions relative to him is of the inward motions and addresses of the will; and, without this, our exterior services are like the paying of a piece of money, in which we have defaced the image; it is not current.

6. Secondly: But besides the willingness to do the acts of express command, the readiness to do the intimations and tacit significations of God's pleasure is the best testimony in the world, that our will is in the obedience. Thus did the holy Jesus undertake a nature of infirmity, and suffer a death of shame and sorrow, and became obedient from the circumcision even unto the death of the cross; not staying for a command, but because it was his Father's pleasure mankind should be redeemed. For, before the susception of it, he was not a person subjicible to a command: it was enough, that he understood the inclinations and designs of his Father's mercies. And therefore God hath furnished us with instances of uncommanded piety to be a touchstone of our obedience. He that does but his endeavour about the express commands, hath a bridle in his mouth, and is restrained by violence; but a willing spirit is like a greedy eye, devours all it sees, and hopes to make some proportionable returns and compensations of duty for his infirmity, by taking in the intimations of God's pleasure. When God commands chastity, he that undertakes a holy celibate, hath great obedience to the command of chastity. God bids us give alms of our increase; he obeys this with great facility, that "sells all his goods, and gives them to the poor." And, provided our hastiness to snatch at too much, does not make us let go our duty, like the indiscreet loads of too forward persons, too big, or too inconvenient and uncombined, there is not in the world a greater probation of our prompt obedience, than when we look farther than the precise duty, swallowing that and more with our ready and hopeful purposes; nothing being so able to do miracles as love, and yet nothing being so certainly accepted as love, though it could do nothing in productions and exterior ministries.

7. Thirdly: But God requires that our obedience should have another excellency to make it a becoming present to the Divine acceptance; our understanding must be sacrificed too, and become an ingredient of our obedience. We must also believe, that whatsoever God commands, is most fitting to be commanded, is most excellent in itself, and the best for us to do. The first gives our affections and desires to God, and this also gives our reason, and is a perfection of obedience not communicable to the duties we owe to man. For God only is Lord of this faculty, and, being the fountain of all wisdom, therefore commands our understanding, because he alone can satisfy it. We are bound to obey human laws, but not bound to think the laws we live under are the most prudent constitutions in the world. But God's commandments are not only "a lantern to our feet, and a light unto our paths," but a rule to our reason, and satisfaction to our understandings; as being the instruments of our address to God, and conveyances of his grace, and manuductions to eternity. And therefore St. John Climacus defines obedience to be "an unexamined and unquestioned motion, a voluntary death and sepulture of the will, a life without curiosity, a laying aside our own discretion in the midst of the riches of the most excellent understandings."

8. And certainly there is not in the world a greater strength against temptations, than is deposited in an obedient understanding; because that only can regularly produce the same affections, it admits of fewer degrees, and an unfrequent alteration. But the actions proceeding from the appetite, as it is determined by any other principle than a satisfied understanding, have their heightenings and their declensions, and their changes and mutations, according to a thousand accidents. Reason is more lasting than desire, and with fewer means to be tempted; but affections and motions of appetite, as they are procured by any thing, so may they expire by as great variety of causes. And therefore, to serve God by way of understanding, is surer, and in itself [unless it be by the accidental increase of degrees] greater, than to serve him upon the motion and principle of passions and desires; though this be fuller of comfort and pleasure than the other. When Lot lived amongst the impure Sodomites, where his righteous soul was in a continual agony, he had few exterior incentives to a pious life, nothing to enkindle the sensible flame of burning desires toward piety; but in the midst of all the discouragements of the world, nothing was left him but the way and precedency of a truly-informed reason and conscience. Just so is the way of those wise souls, who live in the midst of "a crooked and perverse generation:" where piety is out of countenance, where austerity is ridiculous, religion under persecution, no examples to lead us on; there the understanding is left to be the guide, and it does the work the surest; for this makes the duty of many to be certain, regular, and chosen, constant, integral, and perpetual: but this way is like the life of an unmarried or a retired person, less of grief in it, and less of joy. But the way of serving God with the affections, and with the pleasures and entertainments of desires, is the way of the more passionate and imperfect, not in a man's power to choose or to procure; but comes by a thousand chances, meeting with a soft nature, credulous or weak, easy or ignorant, softened with fears, or invited by forward desires.

9. Those that did live amidst the fervours of the primitive charity, and were warmed by their fires, grew inflamed by contact and vicinity to such burning and shining lights. And they therefore grew to high degrees of piety, because then every man made judgment of his own actions by the proportions which he saw before him, and believed all de-

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scents from those greater examples to be so many degrees from the rule. And he that lives in a college of devout persons, will compare his own actions with the devotion and customs of that society, and not with the remissness of persons he hears of in story, but what he sees and lives with. But if we live in an age of indevotion, we think ourselves well assoiled if we be warmer than their ice; every thing, which is above our example, being eminent and conspicuous, though it be but like the light of a glow-worm, or the sparkling of a diamond, yet, if it be in the midst of darkness, it is a goodly beauty. This I call the way of serving God by desires and affections: and this is altered by example, by public manners, by external works, by the assignment of offices, by designation of conventions for prayer, by periods and revolutions of times of duty, by hours and solemnities; so that a man shall owe his piety to these chances, which, although they are graces of God, and instruments of devotion, yet they are not always in our power; and therefore they are but accidental ministers of a good life, and the least constant or durable. But when the principle of our piety is a conformity of our understanding to God's laws; when we are instructed what to do, and therefore do it, because we are satisfied it is most excellent to obey God; this will support our piety against objections, lead it on in despite of disadvantages: this chooses God with reason, and is not determined from without. And as it is in some degree necessary for all times, so it is the greatest security against the change of laws and princes, and religions and ages: when all the incentives of affections and exterior determinations of our piety shall cease, and perhaps all external offices, and "the daily sacrifice," and piety itself, shall fail from the face of the land; then the obedience, founded in the understanding, is the only lasting strength left us to make retreat to, and to secure our conditions. Thus, from the composition of the will and affections with our exterior acts of obedience to God, our obedience is made willing, swift, and cheerful; but from the composition of the understanding our obedience becomes strong, sincere, and persevering; and this is that which St. Paul calls "our reasonable service."

10. Fourthly: To which if we add, that our obedience be universal, we have all the qualifications which make the duty to be pious and prudent. The meaning is, that we obey God in all his sanctions, though the matter be in common account small and inconsiderable, and give no indulgence to ourselves to recede from the rule, in any matter whatsoever. For the veriest minute of obedience is worth our attention, as being by God esteemed the trial of our obedience in a greater affair. "He that is unjust in a little, will be unjust in a greater,"[e] said our blessed Saviour. And since to God all matter is alike, and no more accrues to him in an hecatomb than in a piece of gum, in an ascetic severity than in a secular life, God regards not the matter of a precept, but the obedience, which in all instances is the same; and he that will prevaricate, when the matter is trifling, and, by consequence, the temptations to it weak and impotent, and soon confuted, will think he may better be excused, when the temptations are violent and importunate; as it commonly happens in affairs of greater importance. He that will lie to save sixpence, will not stick at it when a thousand pound is the purchase; and possibly there is more contempt and despite done to the Divine authority, when we disobey it in such particulars, wherein the obedience is most easy, and the temptations less troublesome. I do not say there is more injustice or more malice in a small disobedience than in a greater; but there is either more contempt, or more negligence and dissolution of discipline, than in the other.

11. And it is no small temptation of the devil, soliciting of us not to be curious of scruples and grains, not to disturb our peace for lighter disobediences; persuading us that something must be indulged to public manners, something to the civilities of society, something to nature, and to the approaches of our passions, and the motions of our first desires; but that "we be not over-righteous." And true it is, that sometimes such surreptions and smaller indecencies are therefore pardoned, and lessened almost to anullity, because they dwell in the confines of things lawful and honest, and are not so notorious as to be separated from permissions by any public, certain, and universal cognizance; and therefore may pass upon a good man, sometimes without observation. But it is a temptation, when we think of neglecting them by a predetermined incuriousness, upon pretence they are small. But this must be reduced to more regular conclusions.

12. First: Although smaller disobediences expressed in slight misbecoming actions, when they come by surprise and sudden invasion, are, through the mercies of God, dashed in the very approach, their bills of accusation are thrown out, and they are not esteemed as competent instruments of separation from God's love; yet when a smaller sin comes by design, and is acted with knowledge and deliberation, (for then it is properly an act of disobedience,) "malitia supplet defectum ætatis," the malice of the agent heightens the smallness of the act, and makes up the iniquity. To drink liberally once, and something more freely than the strict rules of christian sobriety and temperance permit, is pardoned easier, when without deliberation and by surprise the person was abused, who intended not to transgress a minute, but by little and little was mistaken in his proportions: but if a man by design shall estimate his draughts and his good fellowship, and shall resolve upon a little intemperance, thinking, because it is not very much, it is therefore none at all, that man hath mistaken himself into a crime; and although a little wound upon the finger is very curable, yet the smallest prick upon the heart is mortal: so is a design and purpose of the smallest disobedience in its formality, as malicious and destructive as in its matter it was pardonable and excusable.

[e] Luke xvi. 10.

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13. Secondly: Although every lesser disobedience, when it comes singly, destroys not the love of God; (for, although it may lessen the habit, yet it takes not away its natural being, nor interrupts its acceptation, lest all the world should in all instants of time be in a damnable condition;) yet when these smaller obliquities are repeated, and no repentance intervenes, this repetition combines and unites the lesser till they be concentred, and by their accumulation make a crime:[f] and therefore a careless reiterating, and an incurious walking in misbecoming actions, is deadly and damnable in the return, though it was not so much at the setting forth. Every idle word is to be accounted for, but we hope in much mercy; and yet he that gives himself over to immoderate talking,[g] will swell his account to a vast and mountainous proportion, and call all the lesser escapes into a stricter judgment. He that extends his recreation an hour beyond the limits of christian prudence, and the analogy of its severity and employment, is accountable to God for that improvidence and waste of time; but he that shall misspend a day, and because that sin is not scandalous like adultery, or clamorous like oppression, or unusual like bestiality, or crying for revenge like detaining the portion of orphans, shall therefore misspend another day, without revocation of the first by an act of repentance and redemption of it, and then shall throw away a week, still adding to the former account upon the first stock, will at last be answerable for a habit of idleness, and will have contracted a vain and impertinent spirit. For since things, which in their own kind are lawful, become sinful by the degree; if the degree be heightened by intention, or become great, like a heap of sand by a coacervation of the innumerable atoms of dust, the actions are as damnable as any of the natural daughters and productions of hell, when they are entertained without scruple, and renewed without repentance, and continued without dereliction.

14. Thirdly: Although some inadvertencies of our life and lesser disobedience accidentally become less hurtful, and because they are entailed upon the infirmities of a good man, and the less wary customs and circumstances of society, are also consistent with the state of grace; yet all affection[h] to the smallest sins becomes deadly and damnable. "He that loves his danger, shall perish in it," saith the wise man; and every friendly entertainment of an indecency invites in a greater crime; for no man can love a small sin, but there are in the greater crimes of its kind more desirable flatteries, and more satisfactions of sensuality, than in those suckers and sprigs of sin. At first, a little disobedience is proportionable to a man's temper, and his conscience is not fitted to the bulk of a rude crime: but when a man hath accepted the first insinuation of delight and swallowed it, that little sin is past, and needs no more to dispute for entrance; then the next design puts in, and stands in the same probability to succeed the first, and greater than the first had to make the entry. However, to love any thing that God hates, is direct enmity with him; and whatsoever the instance be, it is absolutely inconsistent with charity, and therefore incompetent with the state of grace. So that if the sin be small, it is not a small thing that thou hast given thy love to it; every such person perishes like a fool, cheaply and ingloriously.

15. Fourthly: But it also concerns the niceness and prudence of obedience to God, to stand at farther distance from a vice, than we usually attend to. For many times virtue and vice differ but one degree;[i] and the neighbourhood is so dangerous, that he who desires to secure his obedience and duty to God, will remove further from the danger. For there is a rule of justice, to which if one degree more of severity be added, it degenerates into cruelty; and a little more mercy is remissness, and want of discipline introduces licentiousness, and becomes unmercifulness as to the public, and unjust as to the particular. Now this consideration is heightened, if we observe, that virtue and vice consist not in an indivisible point; but there is a latitude for either, which is not to be judged by any certain rules drawn from the nature of the thing, but to be estimated in proportion to the persons and other accidental circumstances. He that is burdened with a great charge, for whom he is bound, under a curse and the crime of infidelity, to provide, may go farther in the acquisition, and be more provident in the use of his money, than those persons for whom God hath made more ample provisions, and hath charged them with fewer burdens and engagements economical. And yet no man can say, that just beyond such a degree of care stands covetousness, and thus far on this side is carelessness; and a man may be in the confines of death before he be aware. Now, the only way to secure our obedience and duty in such cases, is to remove farther off, and not to dwell upon the confines of the enemy's country. My meaning is, that it is not prudent nor safe for a man to do whatsoever he lawfully may do.

16. For besides that we are often mistaken in our judgments concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of actions, he that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully do, if ever he does change his station, and increase in giving himself liberty, will quickly arrive at doing things unlawful. It is good to keep a reserve of our liberty, and to restrain ourselves within bounds narrower than the largest sense of the commandment, that when our affections wander and enlarge themselves, (as some time

[f] Quæ humanæ fragilitati, quamvis parva, tamen crebra subrepunt, si collecta contra nos fuerint, ità nos gravabunt et oppriment, sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum.—S. AUG. lib. 1. hom. 50. Idem lib. de Pœnit. Peccata venialia si multiplicentur, decorum nostrum ità exterminant, ut à cœlestis sponsi amplexibus nos separent.

[g] Γλώσσῃ ματαίᾳ ζημία προστρίβεται.
ÆSCH. Prom.

Ἀχαλίνων στομάτων τέλος δυστυχία.
EURIP. Bacch.

[h] Nullum peccatum est adeò veniale, quod non fiat criminale, dum placet.—Dist. 25. sect. Nunc autem, ex S. AUGUST.

[i] Cùm fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum
Discernunt avidi. HORAT. Od. xviii. lib. i.

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or other they will do,) then they may enlarge beyond the ordinary, and yet be within the bounds of lawfulness. That of which men make a scruple and a question at first, after an habitual resolution of it, stirs no more; but then their question is of something beyond it. When a man hath accustomed himself to pray seven times a day, it will a little trouble his peace if he omits one or two of those times; but if it be resolved then, that he may please God with praying devoutly, though but thrice every day, after he hath digested the scruples of this first question, possibly some accidents may happen, that will put his conscience and reason to dispute, whether three times be indispensably necessary: and still, if he be far within the bounds of lawfulness, 'tis well; but if he be at the margin of it, his next remove may be into dissolution and unlawfulness. He that resolves to gain all that he may lawfully this year, it is odds but next year he will be tempted to gain something unlawfully. He that, because a man may be innocently angry, will never restrain his passion, in a little time will be intemperate in his anger, and mistake both his object and the degree. Thus facetiousness and urbanity, entertained with an open hand, will turn into jestings that are uncomely.

17. If you will be secure, remove your tent, dwell farther off. God hath given us more liberty than we may safely use; and although God is so gracious as to comply much with our infirmities, yet if we do so too, as God's goodness in indulging liberty to us was to prevent our sinning, our complying with ourselves will engage us in it: but if we imprison and confine our affections into a narrower compass, then our extravagancies may be imperfect, but will not easily be criminal. The dissolution of a scrupulous and strict person is not into a vice, but into a less degree of virtue. He that makes a conscience of loud laughter, will not easily be drawn into the wantonness of balls and revellings, and the longer and more impure carnivals. This is the way to secure our obedience; and no men are so curious of their health as they that are scrupulous of the air they breathe in.

But now, for our obedience to man, that hath distinct considerations, and apart.

18. First: All obedience to man is for God's sake; for God, imprinting his authority upon the sons of men,[k] like the sun reflecting upon a cloud, produces a parhelius, or a representation of his own glory, though in great distances and imperfection; it is the Divine authority, though charactered upon a piece of clay, and imprinted upon a weak and imperfect man. And therefore obedience to our superiors must be universal, in respect of persons, "to all superiors." This precept is expressly apostolical: "Be subject to every constitution and authority of man, for the Lord's sake."[l] It is for God's sake, and therefore to every one, "Whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to his ministers in subordination." That is for civil government. For ecclesiastical, this: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."[m] All, upon whom any ray of the Divine authority is imprinted, whether it be in greater or smaller characters, are, in proportion to their authority, to be obeyed; to all upon the same ground; for "there is no power but of God."[n] So that no infirmity of person, no undervaluing circumstance, no exterior accident, is an excuse for disobedience: and to obey the Divine authority, passing through the dictates of a wise, excellent, and prudent governor, but to neglect the impositions of a looser head, is to worship Christ only upon the mount Tabor, and in the glories of his transfiguration, and to despise him upon mount Calvary, and in the clouds of his inglorious and humble passion: "Not only to the good and gentle," so St. Peter, "but to the harsh and rigid."[o] And it was by Divine Providence, that all those many and stricter precepts of obedience to governors in the New Testament were verified by instances of tyrants, persecutors, idolaters, and heathen princes; and for others amongst whom there was variety of disposition, there is no variety of imposition, but all excuses are removed, and all kinds of governors drawn into the sanction and sacredness of authority.

19. Secondly: Not only "to all governors," but "in all things," we must obey. "Children, obey your parents in all things:"[p] and, "Servants, obey your masters in all things." And this also is upon the same ground; do it "as unto Christ; as unto the Lord, and not unto men."[q] But then this restrains the universality of obedience, that it may run within its own channel; "as unto the Lord," therefore nothing against the Divine commandment. For if God speaks to us by man, transmitting laws for conservation of civil society, for ecclesiastical policy, for justice and personal advantages, for the interests of virtue and religion, for discountenancing of vice, we are to receive it with the same veneration as if God spake himself to us immediately. But because, by his terror upon mount Sinai, he gave testimony, how great favour it is to speak to us by the ministration of our brethren, it were a strange impudence, when we desire a proportionable and gentle instrument of Divine commands, we should, for this very proportion, despise the minister; like the frogs in the apologue, insulting upon their wooden king. But then, if any thing come contrary to a Divine law, know "it is the voice of Jacob," of the supplanter, not of the right heir; and though we must obey man for God's sake, yet we must never disobey God for man's sake. In all things else we find no exception; but according as the superiors intend the obligation, and express it by the signature of laws, customs, interpretations, permissions, and dispensations; that is, so far as the law is obli-

[k] "Εκαστοι τῶν ἐξ ἐθνους ἐνθεόν τι γένος τὸ βασιλικὸν ὑπολαβόντες, θεοὺς ἀυτοῖς πατέρας ἐπεστησαν· καὶ τοίνυν οἷς μὲν τὸ εὐγενὲς καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν ἄκρως ἐπέπρεπεν, ἐκ Διὸς τούτους ἐποίουν κατάγειν τὸ γένος.—EUSTATH. ad Iliad. i.

[l] 1 Pet. ii. 13. [m] Heb. xiii. 1. 7.

[n] Rom. xiii. 1.
Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
Reges in ipsos imperium est Jovis,
Cuncta supercilio moventis.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 1.

[o] Ubi suprà. [p] Col. iii. 20, 22. [q] Ephes. vi. 5, 7.

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gatory in general, and not dispensed with in particular, so far obedience is a duty in all instances of acts, where no sin is ingredient.

20. Thirdly: And here also the smallness and cheapness of the duty does not tolerate disobedience; for the despising the smallest injunction is an act of as formal and direct rebellion, as when the prevarication is in a higher instance. It is here as in Divine laws, but yet with some difference: for small things do so little co-operate to the end of human laws, that a smaller reason does, by way of interpretation and tacit permission, dispense, than can in a Divine sanction, though of the lowest offices. Because God commands duties not for the end, to which they of themselves do co-operate; but to make sacred his authority; and that we, by our obedience, may confess him to be Lord: but in human laws, the authority is made sacred, not primarily for itself, but principally, that the laws, made in order to the conservation of societies, may be observed. So that, in the neglect of the smallest of Divine ordinances, we as directly oppose God's great purpose and intendment as in greater matters; God's dominion and authority (the conservation of which was his principal intention) is alike neglected: but, in omitting a human imposition of small concernment, the case is different;[r] it is certain, there is not any considerable violence done to the public interest by a contemptible omission of a law: the thing is not small, if the commonwealth be not safe, and all her great ends secured: but if they be, then the authority is inviolate, unless a direct contempt were intended; for its being was in order to that end; not for itself, as it is in the case of Divine laws, but that the public interest be safe.

21. And therefore, as great matters of human laws may be omitted for great reasons, so may smaller matters for smaller reasons, but never without reason: for, "causelessly" and "contemptuously" are all one. But in the application of the particulars, either the laws themselves, or custom, or the prudence of a sincere righteous man, or of a wise and disinterested person, is to be the judge. But let no man's confidence increase, from the smallness of the matter to a contempt of the authority; for there are some sins whose malignity is accidentally increased by the slightness of the subject matter; such are blasphemy, perjury, and the contempt of authority. To blaspheme God for the loss of an asper or a penny, to be forsworn in judgment for the rescuing of a few maravides or a five-groats fine, is a worse crime than to be perjured for the saving ten thousand pounds; and to despise authority, when the obedience is so easy as the wearing of a garment or doing of a posture, is a greater and more impudent contempt, than to despise authority imposing a great burden of a more considerable pressure, where human infirmity may tempt to a disobedience, and lessen the crime. And let this caution also be inserted, that we do not at all neglect small impositions, if there be direct and signal injunction in the particular instance. For as a great body of light, transmitting his rays through a narrow hollowness, does, by that small pyramis, represent all the parts of its magnitude and glory; so it may happen, that a public interest, and the concernments of authority, and the peace of a church, and the integral obedience of the subjects, and the conservation of a community, may be transferred to us by an instance, in its own nature, inconsiderable; such as are wearing of a cognizance, remembering of a word, carrying a branch in time of war, and things of the same nature: and therefore, when the hand of authority is stretched out and held forth upon a precept, and designs the duty upon particular reason, or with actual intuition; there is not the same facility of being dispensed with, as in the neglected and unconsidered instances of other duties.

This only I desire to be observed; that if death, or any violent accident, imprisonment, loss of livelihood, or intolerable inconveniences, be made accidentally consequent to the observing of a law merely human, the law binds not in the particular instance. No man is bound to be a martyr for a ceremony, or to die rather than break a canon, or to suffer confiscation of goods for the pertinacious keeping of a civil constitution. And it is not to be supposed, that a lawgiver would have decreed a rite, and bound the lives of the subjects to it, which are of a far greater value than a rite; not only because it were tyrannical and unreasonable, but because the evil of the law were greater than the good of it; it were against the reason of all laws, and destroys the privileges of nature, and it puts a man into a condition as bad as the want of all laws; for nothing is civilly or naturally worse than death, to which the other evils arrive in their proportion. This is to be understood in particular and positive precepts, introduced for reasons particular, that is, less than those are which combine all societies, and which are the cement of all bodies political; I mean, laws ritual in the church, and accidental and emergent in the state. And that, which is the best sign to distinguish these laws from others, is also the reason of the assertion. Laws, decreed with a penalty to the transgressors, cannot bind to an evil greater than that penalty. If it be appointed, that we use a certain form of liturgy, under the forfeiture of five pounds for every omission, I am bound in conscience to obey it, where I can: but I am supposed legally to be disabled, if any tyrant power shall threaten to kill me if I do, or make me pay a hundred pounds, or any thing greater than the forfeiture of the law. For all the civil and natural power of the law is by its coercion, and the appendant punishment. The law operates by rewards and punishments, by hope and fear; and it is unimaginable that the law, under a less penalty, can oblige us, in any case or accident, to suffer a greater. For the compulsion of the tyrant is greater than the coercion of the lawgiver; and the prince, thinking the penalty annexed to be band sufficient, intended no greater evil to the transgressor than the expressed penalty; and therefore much less would he have them, that obey the law by any

[r] De minimis non curat lex.

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necessity, be forced to a greater evil; for, then disobedience should escape better than obedience. True it is, every disobeying person, that pays the penalty, is not quite discharged from all his obligation; but it is then, when his disobeying is criminal upon some other stock besides the mere breach of the law, as contempt, scandal, or the like: for the law binds the conscience indirectly, and by consequence; that is, in plain language, God commands us to obey human laws, and the penalty will not pay for the contempt, because that is a sin against God; it pays for the violation of the law, because that was all the direct transgression against man.[s] And then who shall make him recompence, for suffering more than the law requires of him? Not the prince; for it is certain, the greatest value he set upon the law was no bigger than the penalty; and the commonwealth is supposed to be sufficiently secured in her interest by the penalty, or else the law was weak, impotent, and unreasonable. Not God; for it is not an act of obedience to him; for he binds us no farther to obey human laws than the lawgiver himself intends or declares; who cannot reasonably be supposed so over careful, as to bind hay with cords of silk and gold, or sumptuary laws with the threads of life; nor a father commanding his child to wait on him every meal, be thought to intend his obligation, even though the house be ready to fall on his head, or when he is to pass a sudden or unfordable flood, before he can get to him. And that it may appear man ought not, it is certain God himself doth not oblige us, in all cases and in all circumstances, to observe every of his positive precepts. For, "assembling together"[t] is a duty of God's commanding, which we are "not to neglect:" but if death waits at the door of these assemblies, we have the practice of the primitive and best christians, to warrant us to serve God in retirements, and cells, and wildernesses, and leave "the assembling together" till better opportunities. If I receive more benefit, or the commonwealth, or the church and religion, any greater advantage, by my particular obedience in these circumstances, (which cannot easily be supposed will be,) it is a great act of charity to do it, and then to suffer for it: but if it be no more,[u] that is, if it be not expressly commanded to be done,-(though with loss of life or confiscation,) it is a good charity to save my own life, or my own estate: and though the other may be better, yet I am not in all cases obliged to do that which is simply the best. It is a tolerable infirmity, and allowed amongst the very first permissions of nature, that I may preserve my life, unless it be in a very few cases, which are therefore clearly to be expressed, or else the contrary is to be presumed, as being a case most favourable. And it is considerable, that nothing is worse than death, but damnation, or something that partakes of that in some of its worst ingredients; such as is a lasting torment, or a daily great misery in some other kind. And therefore, since no human law can bind a man to a worse thing than death, if obedience brings me to death, I cannot be worse, when I disobey it; and I am not so bad, if the penalty of death be not expressed. And so for other penalties, in their own proportions.

This discourse is also to be understood concerning the laws of peace, not of war; not only because every disobedience in war may be punished with death, (according as the reason may chance,) but also, because little things may be of great and dangerous consequence. But in peace it is observable, that there is no human, positive, superinduced law, but by the practice of all the world, (which, because the permission of the prince is certainly included in it, is the surest interpretation,) it is dispensed withal, by ordinary necessities, by reason of lesser inconveniences and common accidents: thus the not saying of our office daily, is excused by the study of divinity; the publishing the banns of matrimony, by an ordinary incommodity; the fasting days of the church, by a little sickness or a journey; and therefore much rather if my estate, and most of all if my life, be in danger with it: and to say, that, in these cases, there is no interpretative permission to omit the particular action, is to accuse the laws and the lawgiver, the one of unreasonableness, the other of uncharitableness.

22. Fourthly: These considerations are upon the execution of the duty; but even towards man our obedience must have a mixture of the will and choice, like as our injunction of obedience to the Divine command. "With good will doing service," (saith the apostle,) for it is impossible to secure the duty of inferiors but by conscience and good will; unless provision could be made against all their secret arts, and concealments and escapings; which, as no providence can foresee, so no diligence can cure. It is but an "eye-service," whatsoever is compelled and involuntary. Nothing rules a man in private, but God and his own desires; and they give laws in a wilderness, and accuse in a cloister, and do execution in a closet, if there be any prevarication.

23. Fifthly: But obedience to human laws goes no farther: we are not bound to obey with a direct and particular act of understanding, as in all Divine sanctions; for so long as our superiors are fallible, though it be highly necessary we conform our wills to their innocent laws, yet it is not a duty, we should think the laws most prudent or convenient; because all laws are not so; but it may concern the interest of humility and self-denial, to be subject to an inconvenient, so it be not a sinful, command: for so we must choose an affliction, when God offers it, and give God thanks for it; and yet we may cry under the smart of it, and call to God for ease and remedy. And yet it were well, if inferiors would not be too busy in disputing the prudence of their governors, and the convenience of their constitutions: whether they be sins or no in the execution, and to our particulars, we are concerned to look to; I say, as to our

[s] Lucius Veratius pro delectamento habuit os hominis liberi palmâ verberare. Eum servus sequebatur crumenam plenam assium gestans, et quemcunque percusserat, jussit statim numerari 25 asses, qui pro mulctâ huic offensæ ex lege XII. Tab. imponebantur.—A. GEL. lib. XX. c. i.

[t] Heb. x. 25. [u] Vide Part ii. Disc. x. n. 11.

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particulars; for an action may be a sin in the prince commanding it, and yet innocent in the person executing: as in the case of unjust wars, in which the subject, who cannot, ought not to be a judge, yet must be a minister; and it is notorious in the case of executing an unjust sentence, in which not the executioner, but the judge, is the only unjust person;[x] and he that serves his prince in an unjust war, is but the executioner of an unjust sentence: but whatever goes farther, does but undervalue the person, slight the government, and unloose the golden cords of discipline. For we are not intrusted in providing for degrees, so we secure the kind and condition of our actions. And since God, having derived rays and beams of majesty, and transmitted it in parts upon several states of men,[y] hath fixed human authority and dominion in the golden candlestick of understanding, he that shall question the prudence of his governor, or the wisdom of his sanction, does unclasp the golden rings that tie the purple upon the prince's shoulder; he tempts himself with a reason to disobey, and extinguish the light of majesty by overturning the candlestick, and hiding the opinion of his wisdom and understanding. And let me say this; he that is confident of his own understanding and reasonable powers, (and who is more than he that thinks himself wiser than the laws?) needs no other devil in the neighbourhood, no tempter but himself to pride and vanity, which are the natural parents of disobedience.

24. But a man's disobedience never seems so reasonable,[z] as when the subject is forbidden to do an act of piety, commanded indeed in the general, but uncommanded in certain circumstances. And forward piety and assiduous devotion, a great and indiscreet mortifier, is often tempted to think no authority can restrain the fervours and distempers of zeal in such holy exercises; and yet it is very often as necessary to restrain the indiscretions of a forward person, as to excite the remissness of the cold and frozen. Such persons were the Sarabites, spoken of by Cassian,[a] who were greater labourers and stricter mortifiers, than the religious in families and colleges; and yet they endured no superior, nor laws. But such customs as these are humiliation without humility; humbling the body and exalting the spirit; or, indeed, sacrifices, and no obedience. It was an argument of the great wisdom of the fathers of the desert:[b] when they heard of the prodigious severities exercised by Simeon Stylites upon himself, they sent one of the religious to him, with power to inquire what was his manner of living, and what warrant he had for such a rigorous undertaking, giving in charge to command him to give it over, and to live in a community with them, and according to the common institution of those religious families. The messenger did so; and immediately Simeon removed his foot from his pillar, with a purpose to descend; but the other, according to his commission, called to him to stay, telling him his station and severity were from God. And he that in so great a piety was humble and obedient, did not undertake that strictness out of singularity, nor did it transport him to vanity; for that he had received from the fathers to make judgment of the man, and of his institution: whereas if upon pretence of the great holiness of that course, he had refused the command, the spirit of the person was to be declared caitive and imprudent, and the man driven from his troublesome and ostentatious vanity.

25. Our fasts, our prayers, our watchings, our intentions of duty, our frequent communions, and all exterior acts of religion, are to be guided by our superior, if he sees cause to restrain or assuage any excrescence. For a wound may heal too fast, and then the tumour of the flesh is proud, not healthful; and so may the indiscretions of religion swell to vanity, when we think they grow towards perfection: but when we can endure the caustics and correctives of our spiritual guides, in those things in which we are most apt to please ourselves, then our obedience is regular and humble; and in other things there is less of danger. There is a story told of a very religious person,[c] whose spirit in the ecstasy of devotion, was transported to the clarity of a vision; and he seemed to converse personally with the holy Jesus, feeling from such intercourse great spiritual delights and huge satisfactions. In the midst of these joys, the bell called to prayers; and he, used to the strictness and well instructed in the necessities of obedience, went to the church, and having finished his devotions, returned, and found the vision in the same posture of glories and entertainment; which also said to him, "Because thou hast left me, thou hast found me; for if thou hadst not left me, I had presently left thee." Whatever the story be, I am sure it is a good parable; for the way to increase spiritual comforts is, to be strict in the offices of humble obedience; and we never lose any thing of our joy, by laying it aside to attend a duty; and Plutarch reports more honour of Agesilaus' prudence and modesty, than of his gallantry and military fortune;[d] for he was more honourable by obeying the decree of the Spartan senate, recalling him from the midst of his triumphs, than he could have been by finishing the war with prosperous success and disobedience.

26. Our obedience, being guided by these rules, is urged to us by the consignation of Divine precepts and the loud voice of thunder, even sealed by a signet of God's right hand, the signature of greatest judgments. For God did, with greater severity, punish the rebellion of Korah and his company, than the express murmurs against himself; nay, than the high crime of idolatry: for this crime God visited them with a sword; but for disobedi-

[x] Is damnum dat, qui jubet dare: ejus verò nulla culpa est, cui parere necesse fit.—Ulpian, l. 130.

[y] Μὴ ἔριζε γονεῦσι, κἂν δίκαια λέγῃς.—Laert.

[z] Modum autem tenere in eo difficile est, quod bonum esse credideris.—Sen. ep. 23.

[a] Collat. xviii. c. 17.

[b] Apud Euagrium. De eodem Stylite consulat lector Epiph. lib. i. c. 13. Theod. et 7. Synod. gener. et Baron. ad A. D. 432.

[c] Cassian. Collat. iv. Abbat. Dam. c. 20. et S. Basil. Exhort. ad Vitam Monast. S. Greg. lib. xxxv. Moral. c. 13. S. Bern. De Ord. Vitæ et Morum Instit. c. 1.

[d] Titus Manlius securi percussit filium, postquam hostem gloriosè vicerat in interdicta pugna.—A. Gell. lib. ix. c. 13.

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ence and mutiny against their superiors, God made the earth to swallow some of them, and fire from heaven to consume the rest; to show that rebellion is to be punished by the conspiration of heaven and earth, as it is hateful and contradictory both to God and man. And it is not amiss to observe that obedience to man, being as it is, "for God's sake," and yet to a person clothed with the circumstances and the same infirmities with ourselves, is a greater instance of humility, than to obey God immediately, whose authority is divine, whose presence is terrible, whose power is infinite, and not at all depressed by exterior disadvantages or lessening appearances; just as it is both greater faith and greater charity to relieve a poor saint for Jesus' sake, than to give any thing to Christ himself, if he should appear in all the robes of glory and immediate address. For it is to God and to Christ, and wholly for their sakes, and to them that the obedience is done, or the charity expressed; but themselves are persons whose awfulness, majesty, and veneration, would rather force than invite obedience or alms. But when God and his holy Son stand behind the cloud, and send their servants to take the homage or the charity, it is the same as if it were done to them, but receives the advantage of acceptation, by the accidental adherences of faith and humility to the several actions respectively. When a king comes to rebels in person, it strikes terror and veneration into them, who are too apt to neglect and despise the persons of his ministers, whom they look upon as their fellow-subjects, and consider not in the exaltation of a deputed majesty. Charles the Fifth found a happy experience of it at Gaunt, in Flanders, whose rebellion he appeased by his presence, which he could hardly have done by his army. But if the king's authority be as much revered in his deputy, as it is sacred in his own person, it is the greater humility and more confident obedience. And as it is certain, that he is the most humble that submits to his inferiors; so, in the same proportion, the lower and meaner the instrument upon which God's authority is borne, the higher is the grace that teaches us to stoop so low. I do not say, that a sin against human laws is greater than a prevarication against a Divine commandment; as the instances may be, the distance is next to infinite, and to touch the earth with our foot within the octaves of Easter, or to taste flesh upon days of abstinence, (even in those places, and to those persons, where they did or do oblige,) have no consideration, if they be laid in balance against the crimes of adultery, or blasphemy, or oppression, because these crimes cannot stand with the reputation and sacredness of Divine authority; but those others may, in most instances, very well consist with the ends of government, which are severally provided for in the diversity of sanctions respectively. But if we make our instances to other purposes, we find, that to mutiny in an army, or to keep private assemblies in a monarchy, are worse than a single thought or morose delectation in a fancy of impurity; because those others destroy government more than these destroy charity of God, or obedience. But then, though the instances may vary the conclusion, yet the formal reason is alike, and disobedience to man is a disobedience against God, for God's authority, and not man's, is imprinted upon the superior; and it is like sacred fire in an earthen censer, as holy as if it were kindled with the fanning of a cherub's wing, or placed just under the propitiatory upon a golden altar; and it is but a gross conceit, which cannot distinguish religion from its porter, Isis from the beast that carried it: so that, in all disobedience to men, in proportion to the greatness of the matter, or the malice of the person, or his contradiction to the ends of government and combinations of society, we may use the words by which the prophet upbraided Israel, "Is it not enough that you are grievous unto men, but will you grieve my God also?" [e] It is a contempt of the Divinity, and the affront is transmitted to God himself, when we despise the power which God hath ordained, and all power of every lawful superior is such; the Spirit of God being witness in the highest measure, "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry." [f] It is spoken of rebellion against God, [g] and all rebellion is so; for "he that despiseth you, despiseth me," [h] saith the blessed Jesus; that is menace enough in the instance of spiritual regiment. And, "you are gathered together against the Lord," saith Moses to the rebellious princes in the conspiracy of Dathan; that is for the temporal. And to encourage this duty I shall use no other words than those of Achilles in Homer, "They that obey in this world, are better than they that command in hell." [i]

A Prayer for the Grace of Holy Obedience.

O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus, by whose obedience many became righteous, and reparations were made of the ruins, brought to human nature by the disobedience of Adam; thou camest into the world with many great and holy purposes concerning our salvation, and hast given us a great precedent of obedience, which, that thou mightest preserve to thy heavenly Father, thou didst neglect thy life, and becamest obedient even to the death of the cross. O, let me imitate so blessed example, and, by the merits of thy obedience, let me obtain the grace of humility and abnegation of all my own desires in the clearest renunciation of my will; that I may will and refuse in conformity to thy sacred laws and holy purposes; that I may do all thy will cheerfully, choosingly, humbly, confidently, and continually; and thy

[e] Isaiah vii. 13.

[f] 1 Samuel xv. 23.

[g] Ἡμῖν δὲ πολλῶν νόμων καὶ καλῶν ὄντων, κάλλιστος οὗτός ἐστι,
Τιμᾶν βασιλέα, καὶ προσκυνεῖν εἰκόνα Θεοῦ πάντα σώζοντος.
PLUTARCH in Themist.

[h] Ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμῷ βασιλῆι μάχοιτο.

[i] Βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύμεν ἄλλῳ
Ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,
Ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.
Od. λ. 488

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will may be done upon me with much mercy and fatherly dispensation of thy providence. Amen.

II.

Lord, let my understanding adhere to, and be satisfied in, the excellent wisdom of thy commandments; let my affections dwell in their desires, and all my other faculties be set on daily work for performance of them: and let my love to obey thee make me dutiful to my superiors, upon whom the impresses of thy authority are set by thine own hand; that I may never despise their persons, nor refuse their injunctions, nor choose mine own work, nor murmur at their burdens, nor dispute the prudence of the sanction, nor excuse myself, nor pretend difficulties or impossibilities; but, that I may be indifferent in my desires, and resigned to the will of those whom thou hast set over me; that since all thy creatures obey thy word, I alone may not disorder the creation, and cancel those bands and intermedial links of subordination, whereby my duty should pass to thee and thy glory, but that my obedience being united to thy obedience, I may also have my portion in the glories of thy kingdom, O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

1. THE holy virgin mother, according to the law of Moses, at the expiration of a certain time, came to the temple to be purified. Although, in her sacred parturition, she had contracted no legal impurity, yet she exposed herself to the public opinion and common reputation of an ordinary condition; and still amongst all generations, she is, in all circumstances, accounted blessed, and her reputation no tittle altered, save only, that it is made the more sacred by this testimony of her humility. But this we are taught from the consequence of this instance; that if an end, principally designed in any duty, should be supplied otherwise in any particular person, the duty is nevertheless to be observed; and then the obedience and public order is reason enough for the observation, though the proper end of its designation be wanting in the single person. Thus is fasting designed for mortification[a] of the flesh, and killing all its unruly appetites; and yet married persons, who have another remedy, and a virgin whose temple is hallowed by a gift and the strict observances of chastity, may be tied to the duty: and if they might not, then fasting were nothing else but a publication of our impure desires, and an exposing the person to the confidence of a bold temptation, whilst the young men did observe the faster to be tempted from within. But the holy Virgin, from these acts, (of which, in signification, she had no need, because she sinned not in the conception, nor was impure in the production,) expressed other virtues besides obedience; such as were humble thoughts of herself, devotion and reverence to public sanctions, religion, and charity, which were like the pure leaves of the whitest lily, fit to represent the beauties of her innocence, but were veiled and shadowed by that sacramental of the Mosaic law.

2. The holy Virgin received the greatest favour that any of the daughters of Adam ever did; and knowing from whence, and for whose glory, she had received it, returns the holy Jesus in a present to God again; for she had nothing so precious as himself to make oblation of: and besides that "every first-born among the males was holy to the Lord;" this Child had an eternal and essential sanctity; and until he came into the world, and was made apt for her to make a present of him, there was never in the world any act of adoration proportionable to the honour of the great God; but now there was, and the holy Virgin made it, when she presented the holy Child Jesus. And now, besides that we are taught to return to God whatsoever we have received from him, if we unite our offerings and devotions to this holy present, we shall, by the merit and excellency of this oblation, exhibit to God an offertory, in which he cannot but delight, for the combination's sake and society of his holy Son.

3. The holy mother brought five sicles, and a pair of turtle-doves, to redeem the Lamb of God from the anathema; because every first-born was to be sacrificed to God, or redeemed if it was clean: it was the poor man's price, and the holy Jesus was never set at the greater prices, when he was estimated upon earth. For he, that was Lord of the kingdom, chose his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance; and so it was from his nativity hither. For at his birth he was poor, at his circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sinner; at his presentation poor, and like a sinner and a servant, for he chose to be redeemed with an ignoble price. The five sicles were given to the priest for the redemption of the child; and if the parents were not able, he was to be a servant of the temple, and to minister in the inferior offices to the priest; and this was God's seizure and possession of him: for although all the servants of God are his inheritance, yet the ministers of religion, who derive their portion of temporals from his title, who live upon the corban, and eat the meat of the altar, which is God's peculiar, and come nearer to his holiness by the addresses of an immediate ministration, are God's own upon another and a distinct challenge. But because Christ was to be the prince of another ministry, and the chief priest of another order, he was redeemed from attending the Mosaic rites, which he came to abolish, that he might do his Father's business, in establishing the evangelical. Only remember, that the ministers of religion are but God's usufructuaries: as they are not lords of God's portion, and therefore must dispense it like stewards, not like masters; so the people are not their patrons in paying, nor they

[a] Vide Rodriquez in Explic. Bullæ Cruciatæ; and Sir Thomas More against Tindal.

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their beneficiaries in receiving tithes, or other provisions of maintenance; they owe for it to none but to God himself: and it would also be considered, that, in all sacrilegious detentions of ecclesiastical rights, God is the person principally injured.

4. The turtle-doves[d] were offered also with the signification of another mystery. In the sacred rites of marriage, although the permissions of natural desires are such as are most ordinate to their ends, the avoiding fornication, the alleviation of economical cares and vexations, and the production of children, and mutual comfort and support; yet the apertures and permissions of marriage have such restraints of modesty and prudence, that all transgressions of the just order to such ends is a crime: and besides these, there may be degrees of inordination or obliquity of intention, or too sensual complacency, or unhandsome preparations of mind, or unsacramental thoughts; in which particulars, because we have no determined rule but prudence, and the analogy of the rite, and the severity of our religion, which allow in some cases more, in some less, and always uncertain latitudes, for aught we know, there may be lighter transgressions, something that we know not of: and for these at the purification of the woman, it is supposed, the offering was made, and the turtles, by being an oblation, did deprecate a supposed irregularity; but by being a chaste and marital emblem, they professed the obliquity (if any were) was within the protection of the sacred bands of marriage, and therefore so excusable as to be expiated by a cheap offering. And what they did in hieroglyphic, christians must do in the exposition; be strict observers of the main rites and principal obligations, and not neglectful to deprecate the lesser unhandsomenesses of the too sensual applications.

5. God had, at that instant, so ordered, that, for great ends of his own and theirs, two very holy persons of diverse sexes and like piety, Simeon and Anna, the one who lived an active and secular, the other a retired and contemplative life, should come into the temple by revelation and direction of the Holy Spirit, and see him whom they and all the world did look for, "the Lord's Christ, the consolation of Israel." They saw him, they rejoiced, they worshipped, they prophesied, they sang hymns; and old Simeon did comprehend and circumscribe in his arms him that filled all the world, and was then so satisfied that he desired to live no longer; God had verified his promise, had shown him the Messias, had filled his heart with joy, and made his old age honourable; and now, after all this sight, no object could be pleasant but the joys of paradise. For as a man who has stared too freely upon the face and beauties of the sun, is blind and dark to objects of a less splendour, and is forced to shut his eyes, that he may, through the degrees of darkness, perceive the inferior beauties of more proportioned objects; so was old Simeon: his eyes were so filled with the glories of this revelation, that he was willing to close them in his last night, that he might be brought into the communications of eternity; and he could never more find comfort in any other object this world could minister. For such is the excellency of spiritual things, when they have once filled the corners of our hearts, and made us highly sensible and apprehensive of the interior beauties of God and of religion, all things of this world are flat and empty, and unsatisfying vanities, as unpleasant as the lees of vinegar to a tongue filled with the spirit of high Italic wines. And until we are so dead to the world as to apprehend no gust or freer complacency in exterior objects, we never have entertained Christ, or have had our cups overflow with devotion, or are filled with the Spirit. When our chalice is filled with holy oil, with the anointing from above, it will entertain none of the waters of bitterness; or if it does, they are thrust to the bottom, they are the lowest of our desires, and therefore only admitted, because they are natural and constituent.

6. The good old propheteſs, Anna, had lived long in chaste widowhood, in the service of the temple, in the continual offices of devotion, in fasting and prayer; and now came the happy instant, in which God would give her a great benediction, and an earnest of a greater. The returns of prayer, and the blessings of piety, are certain; and though not dispensed according to the expectances of our narrow conceptions, yet shall they so come, at such times and in such measures, as shall crown the piety, and satisfy the desires, and reward the expectation. It was in the temple, the same place where she had for so many years poured out her heart to God, that God poured forth his heart to her, sent his Son from his bosom, and there she received his benediction. Indeed in such places God does most particularly exhibit himself, and blessing goes along with him wherever he goes. In holy places God hath put his holy name, and to holy persons God does oftentimes manifest the interior and more secret glories of his holiness; provided they come thither, as old Simeon and Anna did, by the motions of the Holy Spirit, not with designs of vanity, or curiosity, or sensuality; for such spirits as those come to profane and desecrate the house, and unhallow the person, and provoke the Deity of the place, and blast us with unwholesome airs.

7. But "Joseph and Mary wondered at those things which were spoken," and treasured them in their hearts, and they became matter of devotion and mental prayer, or meditation.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who, by the inspirations of thy Holy Spirit, didst direct thy servants, Simeon and Anna, to the temple, at the instant of the presentation of the holy Child Jesus, that so thou mightest verify thy promise, and manifest thy Son, and reward the piety of holy people, who longed for redemption by the coming of the Messias; give me the perpetual assistance of the same Spirit to be as a monitor and a guide to me, leading me to all holy actions, and to the embracements and possessions of thy glorious Son; and remember all thy faithful people, who wait for the consolation and re-

[b] Sed pudicitia illis prima, et neutri nota adulteria: conjugii fidem non violant.—PLIN. lib. x. c. 33.

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demption of the church from all her miseries and persecutions, and at last satisfy their desires by the revelations of thy mercies and salvation. Thou hast advanced thy holy Child, and set him up for a sign of thy mercies, and a representation of thy glories. Lord, let no act, or thought, or word of mine, ever be in contradiction to this blessed sign; but let it be for the ruin of all my vices, and all the powers the devil employs against the church, and for the raising up all those virtues and graces, which thou didst design me in the purposes of eternity; but let my portion never be amongst the incredulous, or the scornful, or the heretical, or the profane, or any of those who stumble at this stone, which thou hast laid for the foundation of thy church, and the structures of a virtuous life. Remember me with much mercy and compassion, when the sword of sorrows or afflictions shall pierce my heart; first transfix me with love, and then all the troubles of this world will be consignations to the joys of a better: which grant for the mercies and the name's sake of thy holy Child Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE III.

Of Meditation.

1. IF, in the definition of meditation, I should call it an unaccustomed and unpractised duty, I should speak a truth, though somewhat inartificially: for not only the interior beauties and brighter excellencies are as unfelt as ideas and abstractions are, but also the practice and common knowledge of the duty itself are strangers to us, like the retirements of the deep, or the undiscovered treasures of the Indian hills. And this is a very great cause of the dryness and expiration of men's devotion, because our souls are so little refreshed with the waters and holy dews of meditation. We go to our prayers by chance, or order, or by determination of accidental occurrences; and we recite them, as we read a book; and sometimes we are sensible of the duty, and a flash of lightning makes the room bright, and our prayers end, and the lightning is gone, and we as dark as ever. We draw our water from standing pools, which never are filled but with sudden showers, and therefore we are dry so often: whereas if we would draw water from the fountains of our Saviour, and derive them through the channel of diligent and prudent meditations, our devotion would be a continual current, and safe against the barrenness of frequent droughts.

2. For meditation is an attention and application of spirit to divine things; a searching out all instruments to a holy life, a devout consideration of them, and a production of those affections which are in a direct order to the love of God and a pious conversation. Indeed, meditation is all that great instrument of piety, whereby it is made prudent, and reasonable, and orderly, and perpetual. For, supposing our memory instructed with the knowledge of such mysteries and revelations as are apt to entertain the spirit, the understanding is first and best employed in the consideration of them, and then the will in their reception, when they are duly prepared and so transmitted; and both these in such manner, and to such purposes, that they become the magazine and great repositories of grace, and instrumental to all designs of virtue.

3. For the understanding is not to consider the matter of any meditation in itself, or as it determines in natural excellencies or unworthiness respectively, or with a purpose to furnish itself with notion and riches of knowledge; for that is like the winter sun: it shines, but warms not; but in such order as themselves are put in the designations of theology, in the order of Divine laws, in their spiritual capacity, and as they have influence upon holiness: for the understanding here is something else besides the intellectual power of the soul, it is the spirit; that is, it is celestial in its application, as it is spiritual in its nature; and we may understand it well by considering the beatifical portions of soul and body in their future glories. For therefore, even our bodies in the resurrection shall be spiritual, because the operation of them shall be in order to spiritual glories, and their natural actions (such as are seeing and speaking) shall have a spiritual object and supernatural end; and here, as we partake of such excellencies and co-operate to such purposes, men are more or less spiritual. And so is the understanding taken from its first and lowest ends of resting in notion and ineffective contemplation, and is made spirit; that is, wholly ruled and guided by God's Spirit to supernatural ends and spiritual employments; so that it understands and considers the motions of the "heavens, to declare the glory of God," the prodigies and alterations in the firmament, to demonstrate his handy work; it considers the excellent order of creatures, that we may not disturb the order of creation, or dissolve the golden chain of subordination. Aristotle and Porphyry, and the other Greek philosophers, studied the heavens, to search out their natural causes and production of bodies; the wiser Chaldees and Assyrians studied the same things, that they might learn their influences upon us, and make predictions of contingencies; the moral Egyptian described his theorems in hieroglyphics and fantastic representments, to teach principles of policy, economy, and other prudences of morality and secular negociation: but the same philosophy, when it is made christian, considers as they did, but to greater purposes, even that from the book of the creatures we may glorify the Creator, and hence derive arguments of worship and religion: this is christian philosophy.

4. I instance only in considerations natural to spiritual purposes; but the same is the manner in all meditation, whether the matter of it be nature or revelation. For if we think of hell, and consider the infinity of its duration, and that its flames last as long as God lasts, and thence conjecture, upon the rules of proportion, why a finite creature

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may have an infinite, unnatural duration; or think by what ways a material fire can torment an immaterial substance; or why the devils, who are intelligent and wise creatures, should be so foolish as to hate God, from whom they know every rivulet of amability derives; this is to study, not to meditate: for meditation considers any thing that may best make us to avoid the place and to quit a vicious habit, or master and rectify an untoward inclination, or purchase a virtue, or exercise one: so that meditation is an act of the understanding put to the right use.

5. For the holy Jesus, coming to redeem us from the bottomless pit, did it, by lifting us up out of the puddles of impurity and the unwholesome waters of vanity; "he redeemed us from our vain conversation;" and our understandings had so many vanities, that they were made instruments of great impiety. The unlearned and ruder nations had fewer virtues, but they had also fewer vices, than the wise empires, that ruled the world with violence and wit together. The softer Asians[a] had lust and intemperance in a full chalice; but their understandings were ruder than the finer Latins; for these men's understandings distilled wickedness as through a limbeck, and the Romans drank spirits and the sublimed quintessences of villany; whereas the other made themselves drunk with the lees and cheaper instances of sin: so that the understanding is not an idle and useless faculty; but naturally drives to practice, and brings guests into the inward cabinet of the will, and there they are entertained and feasted. And those understandings, which did not serve the baser end of vices, yet were unprofitable for the most part, and furnished their inward rooms with glasses and beads, and trifles fit for an American mart. From all these impurities and vanities, Jesus hath redeemed all his disciples, and not only thrown out of his temples all the impure rites of Flora and Cybele, but also the trifling and unprofitable ceremonies of the more sober deities; not only vices, but useless and unprofitable speculations; and hath consecrated our head into a temple, our understanding to spirit, our reason to religion, our study to meditation: and this is the first part of the sanctification of our spirit.

6. And this was the cause, holy Scripture commands the duty of meditation in proportion still to the excellencies of piety and a holy life, to which it is highly and aptly instrumental. "Blessed is the man that meditates in the law of the Lord day and night."[b] And the reason of the proposition, and the use of the duty, is expressed to this purpose: "Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I should not sin against thee."[c] The placing and fixing those divine considerations in our understandings, and hiding them there, are designs of high christian prudence, that they, with advantage, may come forth in the expresses of a holy life. For what in the world is more apt and natural to produce humility, than to meditate upon the low stoopings and descents of the holy Jesus, to the nature of a man, to the weaknesses of a child, to the poverties of a stable, to the ignobleness of a servant, to the shame of the cross, to the pains of cruelty, to the dust of death, to the title of a sinner, and to the wrath of God? By this instance, poverty is made honourable, and humility is sanctified and made noble, and the contradictions of nature are amiable, and fitted for a wise election. Thus hatred of sin, shame of ourselves, confusion at the sense of human misery, the love of God, confidence in his promises, desires of heaven, holy resolutions, resignation of our own appetites, conformity to Divine will, oblations of ourselves, repentance and mortification, are the proper emanations from meditation of the sordidness of sin, our proneness to it, our daily miseries as issues of Divine vengeance, the glories of God, his infinite unalterable veracity, the satisfactions in the vision of God the rewards of piety, the rectitude of the laws of God and perfection of his sanctions, God's supreme and paternal dominion, and his certain malediction of sinners: and when any one of these considerations is taken to pieces, and so placed in the rooms of application, that a piece of duty is conjoined to a piece of the mystery, and the whole office to the purchase of a grace, or the extermination of a vice, it is like opening our windows to let in the sun and the wind; and holiness is as proportioned an effect to this practice, as glory is to a persevering holiness, by way of reward and moral causality.

7. For all the affections that are in man are either natural, or by chance, or by the incitation of reason and discourse. Our natural affections are not worthy the entertainments of a christian; they must be supernatural and divine that put us into the hopes of perfection and felicities: and these other, that are good, unless they come by meditation, they are but accidental, and set with the evening sun. But if they be produced upon the strengths of pious meditation, they are as perpetual as they are reasonable, and excellent in proportion to the piety of the principle. A garden that is watered with short and sudden showers is more uncertain in its fruits and beauties, than if a rivulet waters it with a perpetual distilling and constant humectation: and just such are the short emissions and unpremeditated resolutions of piety, begotten by a dash of holy rain from heaven, whereby God sometimes uses to call the careless but to taste what excellencies of piety they neglect; but if they be not produced by the reason of religion, and the philosophy of meditation, they have but the life of a fly or a tall gourd; they come into the world only to say they they had a being; you could scarce know their length, but by measuring the ground they cover in their fall.

8. For since we are more moved by material and sensible objects than by things merely speculative and intellectual, and generals, even in spiritual things, are less perceived and less motive than particulars; meditation frames the understanding part of religion to the proportions of our nature and our weakness, by making some things more circumstantiate and material, and the more spiritual to be

[a] Τοὺς Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ὑπὸ τρυφῆς προκηρύττειν τοῖς ἐφεψίσκουσί τινα καινὴν ἡδονὴν ἀργυρίου πλῆθος.—ATHEN. lib. iv.

[b] Psalm i. 1, 2.

[c] Psalm cxix. 11.

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particular, and therefore the more applicable: and the mystery is made like the gospel to the apostles: "Our eyes do see, and our ears do hear, and our hands do handle, thus much of the word of life," as is prepared for us in the meditation.

9. First: And, therefore, every wise person, that intends to furnish himself with affections of religion, or detestation against a vice, or glorifications of a mystery, still will proportion the mystery, and fit it with such circumstances of fancy and application, as, by observation of himself, he knows aptest to make impression. It was a wise design of Mark Antony, when he would stir up the people to revenge the death of Cæsar; he brought his body to the pleading-place, he showed his wounds, held up the rent mantle, and showed them the garment that he put on that night in which he beat the Nervii; that is, in which he won a victory, for which his memory was dear to them; he showed them that wound, which pierced his heart, in which they were placed by so dear a love, that he made them his heirs, and left to their public use places of delight and pleasure: and then it was natural, when he had made those things present to them which had once moved their love and his honour, that grief at the loss of so honourable and so loved a person should succeed; and then they were lords of all; their sorrow and revenge seldom slept in two beds. And thus holy meditation produces the passions and desires it intends; it makes the objects present and almost sensible; it renews the first passions by a fiction of imagination; it passes from the paschal parlour to Cedron, it tells the drops of sweat, and measures them, and finds them as big as drops of blood, and then conjectures at the greatness of our sins; it fears in the midst of Christ's agonies, it hears his groans, it spies Judas's lantern afar off, it follows Jesus to Gabbatha, and wonders at his innocence and their malice, and feels the strokes of the whip, and shrinks the head when the crown of thorns is thrust hard upon his holy brows; and, at last, goes step by step with Jesus, and carries part of the cross, and is nailed fast with sorrow and compassion, and dies with love. For if the soul be the principle of its own actions, it can produce the same effects by reflex acts of the understanding, when it is assisted by the imaginative part, as when it sees the thing acted: only let the meditation be as minute, particular, and circumstantiate as it may; for a widow, by representing the caresses of her dead husband's love, produces sorrow, and the new affections of a sad endearment. It is too sure, that the recalling the circumstances of a past impurity does re-enkindle the flame, and entertain the fancy with the burnings of an impure fire; and this happens, not by any advantages of vice, but by the nature of the thing, and the efficacy of circumstances. So does holy meditation produce those impresses and signatures, which are the proper effects of the mystery, if presented in a right line and direct representation.

10. Secondly: He that means to meditate in the best order to the productions of piety, must not be inquisitive for the highest mysteries; but the plainest propositions are to him of the greatest use and evidence. For meditation is the duty of all; and therefore God hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding; and the greatest mysteries of christianity are plainest, and yet most fruitful of meditation, and most useful to the production of piety. High speculations are as barren as the tops of cedars; but the fundamentals of christianity are fruitful as the valleys or the creeping vine. For know, that it is no meditation, but it may be an illusion, when you consider mysteries to become more learned, without thoughts of improving piety. Let your affections be as high as they can climb towards God, so your considerations be humble, fruitful, and practically mysterious. "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest," said David. The wings of an eagle would have carried him higher, but yet the innocent dove did furnish him with the better emblem to represent his humble design; and lower meditations might sooner bring him to rest in God. It was a saying of Ægidius, "that an old and a simple woman, if she loves Jesus, may be greater than was brother Bonaventure." Want of learning, and disability to consider great secrets of theology, do not at all retard our progress to spiritual perfections; love to Jesus may be better promoted by the plainer understandings of honest and unlettered people, than by the finer and more exalted speculations of great clerks, that have less devotion. For although the way of serving God by the understanding be the best and most lasting, yet it is not necessary the understanding should be dressed with troublesome and laborious notions: the reason that is in religion is the surest principle to engage our services, and more perpetual than the sweetnesses and the motives of affection; but every honest man's understanding is then best furnished with the discourses and the reasonable parts of religion, when he knows those mysteries of religion upon which Christ and his apostles did build a holy life, and the superstructures of piety; those are the best materials of his meditation.

11. So that meditation is nothing else but the using of all those arguments, motives, and irradiations, which God intended to be instrumental to piety. It is a composition of both ways; for it stirs up our affections by reason and the way of understanding, that the wise soul may be satisfied in the reasonableness of the thing, and the affectionate may be entertained with the sweetnesses of holy passion; that our judgment be determined by discourse, and our appetites made active by the caresses of a religious fancy. And, therefore, the use of meditation is, to consider any of the mysteries of religion with purposes to draw from it rules of life, or affections of virtue, or detestation of vice; and from hence the man rises to devotion, and mental prayer, and intercourse with God; and, after that he rests himself in the bosom of beatitude, and is swallowed up with the comprehensions of love and contemplation. These are the several degrees of meditation. But let us first understand that part of it which is duty, and then, if any thing succeed of a middle condition between duty and re-

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ward, we will consider also how that duty is to be performed, and how the reward is to be managed, that it may prove to be no illusion: therefore I add also this consideration.

12. Thirdly: Whatsoever pious purposes and deliberations are entertained in the act of meditation, they are carefully to be maintained and thrust forward to actual performances, although they were indefinite and indeterminate, and no other ways decreed but by resolutions and determinations of reason and judgment. For God assists every pious action according to its exigence and capacity; and therefore blesses holy meditations with results of reason, and prepossessions dogmatically decreeing the necessity of virtue, and the convenience of certain exercises in order to the purchase of it. He, then, that neglects to actuate such discourses, loses the benefit of his meditation; he is gone no farther than when he first set out, and neglects the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. For if, at any time, it be certain what spirit it is that speaks within the soul, it is most certain, that it is the good Spirit that moves us to an act of virtue, in order to acquisition of the habit: and when God's grace hath assisted us so far in our meditations, that we understand our duty, and are moved with present arguments, if we put not forth our hand and make use of them, we do nothing towards our duty; and it is not certain, that God will create graces in us, as he does the soul. Let every pious person think every conclusion of reason in his meditation to have passed an obligation upon him: and if he hath decreed, that fasting so often, and doing so many religious acts, is convenient and conducing to the production of a grace he is in pursuit of; let him know, that every such decree and reasonable proposition is the grace of God, instrumental to piety, part of his assistance, and therefore, in no case, to be extinguished.

13. Fourthly: In meditation, let the understanding be restrained, and under such prudent coercion and confinement, that it wander not from one discourse to another, till it hath perceived some fruit from the first; either that his soul be instructed in a duty, or moved by a new argument, or confirmed in an old, or determined to some exercise and intermedial action of religion, or hath broke out into some prayers and intercourse with God, in order to the production of a virtue. And this is the mystical design of the spouse in the Canticles of Solomon: "I adjure you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please."[d] For it is lightness of spirit to pass over a field of flowers and to fix nowhere, but to leave it without carrying some honey with us; unless the subject be of itself barren and unfruitful, and then why was it chosen? or that it is made so by our indisposition, and then indeed it is to be quitted. But (it is St. Chrysostom's simile) as a lamb sucking the breast of its dam and mother, moves the head from one part to another, till it hath found a distilling fontinel, and then it fixes, till it be satisfied, or the fountain cease dropping; so should we, in meditation, reject such materials as are barren like the tops of hills, and fix upon such thoughts which nourish and refresh; and there dwell, till the nourishment be drawn forth, or so much of it as we can then temperately digest.

14. Fifthly: In meditation, strive rather for graces than for gifts, for affections in the way of virtue more than the overflowings of sensible devotion; and, therefore, if thou findest any thing by which thou mayest be better, though thy spirit do not actually rejoice, or find any gust or relish in the manducation, yet choose it greedily. For although the chief end of meditation be affection, and not determinations intellectual; yet there is choice to be had of the affections; and care must be taken, that the affections be desires of virtue, or repudiations and aversions from something criminal; not joys and transportations spiritual, comforts, and complacencies; for they are no part of our duty: sometimes they are encouragements, and sometimes rewards; sometimes they depend upon habitude and disposition of body, and seem great matters when they have little in them; and are more bodily than spiritual, like the gift of tears, and yearning of the bowels; and sometimes they are illusions and temptations, at which if the soul stoops and be greedy after, they may prove like Hippomenes's golden apples to Atalanta, retard our course, and possibly do some hazard to the whole race. And this will be nearer reduced to practice, if we consider the variety of matter, which is fitted to the meditation in several states of men travelling towards heaven.

15. For the first beginners in religion are employed in the mastering of their first appetites, casting out their devils, exterminating all evil customs, lessening the proclivity of habits, and countermanding the too great forwardness of vicious inclinations; and this, which divines call the purgative way, is wholly spent in actions of repentance, mortification, and self-denial: and therefore, if a penitent person snatches at comforts, or the tastes of sensible devotion, his repentance is too delicate; it is but a rod of roses and jessamine. If God sees the spirit broken all in pieces, and that it needs a little of the oil of gladness for its support and restitution to the capacities of its duty, he will give it: but this is not to be designed, nor snatched at in the meditation: tears of joy are not good expressions nor instruments of repentance; we must not "gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles;" no refreshments to be looked for here, but such only as are necessary for support; and when God sees they are, let not us trouble ourselves; he will provide them. But the meditations, which are prompt to this purgative way and practice of first beginners, are not apt to produce delicacies, but in the sequel and consequent of it. "Afterwards it brings forth the pleasant fruit of righteousness," but "for the present it hath not joy in it," no joy of sense, though much satisfaction to reason. And such are meditations of the fall of angels and man, the ejection of them from heaven, of our parents from paradise, the

[d] Cant. iii. 5.

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horror and obliquity of sin, the wrath of God, the severity of his anger, mortification of our body and spirit, self-denial, the cross of Christ, death, and hell, and judgment, the terrors of an evil conscience, the insecurities of a sinner, the unreasonableness of sin, the troubles of repentance, the worm and sting of a burdened spirit, the difficulties of rooting out evil habits, and the utter abolition of sin: if these nettles bear honey, we may fill ourselves; but such sweetnesses spoil the operations of these bitter potions. Here, therefore, let your addresses to God, and your mental prayers, be affectionate desires of pardon, humble considerations of ourselves, thoughts of revenge against our crimes, designs of mortification, indefatigable solicitations for mercy, expresses of shame and confusion of face; and he meditates best in the purgative way, that makes these affections most operative and high.

16. After our first step is taken, and the punitive part of repentance is resolved on, and begun, and put forward into good degrees of progress, we then enter into the illuminative way of religion, and set upon the acquist of virtues, and the purchase of spiritual graces; and, therefore, our meditations are to be proportioned to the design of that employment: such as are considerations of the life of Jesus, examples of saints, reasons of virtue, means of acquiring them, designations of proper exercises to every pious habit, the eight beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, the promises of the gospel, the attributes of God, as they are revealed to represent God to be infinite, and to make us religious, the rewards of heaven, excellent and select sentences of holy persons, to be as incentives of piety. These are the proper matter for proficients in religion. But then the affections producible from these are, love of virtue, desires to imitate the holy Jesus, affections to saints and holy persons, conformity of choice, subordination to God's will, election of the ways of virtue, satisfaction of the understanding in the ways of religion, and resolutions to pursue them in the midst of all discomforts and persecutions; and our mental prayers or intercourse with God, which are the present emanations of our meditations, must be in order to these affections, and productions from those: and in all these, yet there is safety and piety, and no seeking of ourselves, but designs of virtue in just reason and duty to God, and for his sake; that is, for his commandment. And in all these particulars, if there be such a sterility of spirit, that there be no end served but of spiritual profit, we are never the worse; all that God requires of us is, that we will live well, and repent in just measure and right manner; and he that doth so, hath meditated well.

17. From hence, if a pious soul passes to affections of greater sublimity, and intimate and more immediate, abstracted and immaterial love, it is well; only remember, that the love God requires of us, is an operative, material, and communicative love; "If ye love me, keep my commandments:" so that still a good life is the effect of the sublimest meditation; and if we make our duty sure behind us, ascend up as high into the mountain as you can, so your ascent may consist with the securities of your person, the condition of infirmity, and the interests of your duty. According to the saying of Ildefonsus, "Our empty saying of lauds, and reciting verses in honour of his name, please not God so well, as the imitation of him does advantage to us; and a devout imitator pleases the spouse better than an idle panegyric."[e] Let your work be like his, your duty in imitation of his precept and example, and then sing praises as you list; no heart is large enough, no voice pleasant enough, no life long enough, nothing but an eternity of duration and a beatifical state can do it well: and therefore holy David joins them both: "Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will show the salvation of God."[f] All thanks and praise, without a right-ordered conversation, are but the echo of religion, a voice and no substance; but if those praises be sung by a heart righteous and obedient, that is, singing with the spirit and singing with understanding, that is the music God delights in.

18. Sixthly: But let me observe and press this caution: It is a mistake, and not a little dangerous, when people, religious and forward, shall too promptly, frequently, and nearly, spend their thoughts in consideration of Divine excellencies. God hath shown thee merit enough to spend all thy stock of love upon him in the characters of his power, the book of the creature, the great tables of his mercy, and the lines of his justice; we have cause enough to praise his excellencies in what we feel of him, and are refreshed with his influence, and see his beauties in reflection, though we do not put our eyes out with staring upon his face. To behold the glories and perfections of God with a more direct intuition, is the privilege of angels, who yet cover their faces in the brightness of his presence: it is only permitted to us to consider the back parts of God. And, therefore, those speculations are too bold and imprudent addresses, and minister to danger more than to religion, when we pass away from the direct studies of virtue, and those thoughts of God, which are the freer and safer communications of the Deity, which are the means of intercourse and relation between him and us, to those considerations concerning God which are metaphysical and remote, the formal objects of adoration and wonder, rather than of virtue and temperate discourses: for God in Scripture never revealed any of his abstracted perfections and remoter and mysterious distances, but with a purpose to produce fear in us, and therefore to chide the temerity and boldness of too familiar and nearer intercourse.

19. True it is that every thing we see or can consider, represents some perfections of God; but this I mean, that no man should consider too much,

[e] Serm. 1. de Assumpt. Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων, πυρὸς τροφή· καὶ ἀναθήματα, ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία. Τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαρκῶς ἡδρασμένον, συνέπτει Θεῷ. HIEROCL.

[f] Psalm l. 23.

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and meditate too frequently, upon the immediate perfections of God, as it were by way of intuition, but as they are manifested in the creatures and in the ministers of virtue: and also, whenever God's perfections be matter of meditation, we should not ascend upwards unto him, but descend upon ourselves, like fruitful vapours drawn up into a cloud, descending speedily into a shower, that the effect of the consideration be a design of good life; and that our loves to God be not spent in abstractions, but in good works and humble obedience. The other kind of love may deceive us; and therefore so may such kinds of considerations, which are its instruments. But this I am now more particularly to consider.

20. For beyond this I have described, there is a degree of meditation so exalted, that it changes the very name, and is called contemplation; and it is in the unitive way of religion, that is, it consists in unions and adherences to God; it is a prayer of quietness and silence, and a meditation extraordinary, a discourse without variety, a vision and intuition of Divine excellencies, an immediate entry into an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetnesses, affections, and starings upon the Divine beauty; and is carried on to ecstasies, raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and apprehensions beatifical. In all the course of virtuous meditation, the soul is like a virgin, invited to make a matrimonial contract; it inquires the condition of the person, his estate and disposition, and other circumstances of amability and desire: but when she is satisfied with these inquiries, and hath chosen her husband, she no more considers particulars, but is moved by his voice and his gesture, and runs to his entertainment and fruition, and spends herself wholly in affections, not to obtain, but enjoy his love.

Thus it is said.

21. But this is a thing not to be discoursed of, but felt: and although, in other sciences, the terms must first be known, and then the rules and conclusions scientifical; here it is otherwise: for first, the whole experience of this must be obtained, before we can so much as know what it is; and the end must be acquired first, the conclusion before the premises. They that pretend to these heights, call them the secrets of the kingdom; but they are such, which no man can describe; such, which God hath not revealed in the publication of the gospel; such, for the acquiring of which there are no means prescribed, and to which no man is obliged, and which are not in any man's power to obtain; such, which it is not lawful to pray for or desire, and concerning which we shall never be called to an account.

22. Indeed, when persons have been long softened with the continual droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impression by the assiduity of prayer, and perpetual alarms of death, and the continual dyings of mortification; the fancy, which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm, and in a disposition and aptitude to take fire, and to flame out in great ascents: and when they suffer transportations beyond the burdens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what, and call it what they please; and other pious people, that hear talk of it, admire that devotion, which is so eminent and beatified; (for so they esteem it;) and so they come to be called raptures and ecstasies, which, even amongst the apostles, were so seldom, that they were never spoken of; for those visions, raptures, and intuitions of St. Stephen, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, were not pretended to be of this kind;[g] not excesses of religion, but prophetical and intuitive revelations, to great and significant purposes, such as may be and are described in story; but these other cannot: for so Cassian reports, and commends a saying of Antony the Eremite, "That is not a perfect prayer, in which the votary does either understand himself or the prayer;" meaning, that persons eminently religious were "divina patientes," as Dionysius Areopagita said of his master Hierotheus, patics in devotion, suffering ravishments of senses,[h] transported beyond the uses of humanity, into the suburbs of beatifical apprehensions: but whether or no this be any thing besides a too intense and indiscreet pressure of the faculties of the soul to inconveniences of understanding, or else a credulous, busy, and untamed fancy, they, that think best of it, cannot give a certainty. There are, and have been, some religious, who have acted madness, and pretended inspirations; and when these are destitute of a prophetic spirit, if they resolve to serve themselves upon the pretences of it, they are disposed to the imitation, if not to the sufferings, of madness; and it would be a great folly to call such "Dei plenos," full of God, who are no better than fantastic and mad people.

23. This we are sure of, that many illusions have come in the likeness of visions, and absurd fancies under the pretence of raptures; and what some have called the spirit of prophecy, hath been the spirit of lying; and contemplation hath been nothing but melancholy and unnatural lengths; and stillness of prayer hath been a mere dream and hypochondriacal devotion, and hath ended in pride or despair, or some sottish and dangerous temptation. It is reported of Heron, the monk, that having lived a retired, mortified, and religious life, for many

[g] Acts x. 10. ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔκστασις, and chap. xi. 5. καὶ εἶδον ἐν ἐκστάσει ὅραμα. Raptus vidit visionem, dum oraverat.

————Mentemque priorem
Expulit, atque hominem toto sibi cedere jussit
Pectore.—Quod de Apolline dixit Lucanus, v. 168.

Qualis erat visio sive ecstasis Balaami, qui visionem Omnipotentis vidit, excidens, sed retectis oculis.—Num. xxiv. 4, 16.

[h] Μανίας δὲ γὲ εἶδη δύο· ἡ μὲν ὑπὸ νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, ἡ δὲ ὑπὸ θείας ἐξαλλαγῆς.—PLATO in Phædr. c. 48.

Τῆς δὲ θείας τετταράων θεῶν τέτταρα μέρη διελόμενοι, μαντικὴν μὲν ἐπίπνοιαν Ἀπόλλωνος θέντες, Διονύσου δὲ τελεστικὴν, Μουσῶν δ' ἀν ποιητικὴν, τετάρτην Ἔρωτος, &c. —Ibid.

Ἔγνων οὖν ἂν περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῦτο· ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν, ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ, καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες, ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν, ὧν λέγουσι.—PLATO in Apol. c. 7.

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years together, at last he came to that habit of austerity or singularity, that he refused the festival refection and freer meals of Easter, and other solemnities, that he might do more eminently than the rest, and spend his time in greater abstractions and contemplations; but the devil, taking advantage of the weakness of his melancholic and unsettled spirit, gave him a transportation and an ecstasy, in which he fancied himself to have attained so great perfection, that he was as dear to God as a crowned martyr, and angels would be his security for indemnity, though he threw himself to the bottom of a well. He obeyed his fancy and temptation, did so, bruised himself to death, and died possessed with a persuasion of the verity of that ecstasy and transportation.

24. I will not say, that all violences and extravagances of a religious fancy are illusions; but I say, that they are all unnatural, not hallowed by the warrant of a revelation, nothing reasonable, nothing secure. I am not sure, that they ever consist with humility; but it is confessed, that they are often produced by self-love, arrogancy, and the great opinion others have of us. I will not judge the condition of those persons, who are said to have suffered these extraordinaries; for I know not the circumstances, or causes, or attendants, or the effects, or whether the stories be true that make report of them; but I shall only advise, that we follow the intimation of our blessed Saviour, that "we sit down in the lowest place, till the master of the feast comes, and bids us sit up higher." If we entertain the inward man in the purgative and illuminative way, that is, in actions of repentance, virtue, and precise duty, that is the surest way of uniting us to God, whilst it is done by faith and obedience; and that also is love; and in these peace and safety dwell. And after we have done our work, it is not discretion in a servant to hasten to his meal, and snatch at the refreshment of visions, unions, and abstractions; but first we must gird ourselves, and wait upon the master, and not sit down ourselves, till we all be called at the great supper of the Lamb.

25. It was, therefore, an excellent desire of St. Bernard, who was as likely as any to have such altitudes of speculation, if God had really dispensed them to persons holy, fantastic, and religious: "I pray God grant to me peace of spirit, joy in the Holy Ghost, to compassionate others in the midst of my mirth, to be charitable in simplicity, to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to mourn with them that mourn; and with these I shall be content: other exaltations of devotion I leave to apostles and apostolic men; the high hills are for the harts and the climbing goats; the stony rocks, and the recesses of the earth, for the conies." It is more healthful and nutritive to dig the earth, and to eat of her fruits, than to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens, and live upon the beams of the sun: so unsatisfying a thing is rapture and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre. If ever a man be more in love with God by such instruments, or more endeared to virtue, or made more severe and watchful in his repentance, it is an excellent grace and gift of God; but then this is nothing but the joys and comfort of ordinary meditation: those extraordinary, as they have no sense in them, so are not pretended to be instruments of virtue, but are, like Jonathan's arrows, shot beyond it, to signify the danger the man is in, towards whom such arrows are shot. But if the person be made unquiet, inconstant, proud, pusillanimous, of high opinion, pertinacious, and confident in uncertain judgments, or desperate, it is certain they are temptations and illusions: so that, as all our duty consists in the ways of repentance and acquist of virtue; so there rests all our safety, and, by consequence, all our solid joys; and this is the effect of ordinary, pious, and regular meditations.

26. If I mistake not, there is temptation like this, under another name, amongst persons whose religion hath less discourse and more fancy, and that is a familiarity with God; which, indeed, if it were rightly understood, is an affection consequent to the illuminative way; that is, an act or an effect of the virtue of religion and devotion, which consists in prayers and addresses to God, lauds, and eucharists, and hymns, and confidence of coming to the throne of grace, upon assurance of God's veracity and goodness infinite: so that familiarity with God, which is an affection of friendship, is the intercourse of giving and receiving blessings and graces respectively; and it is produced by a holy life, or the being in the state of grace, and is a part of every man's inheritance, that is a friend of God. But when familiarity with God shall be esteemed a privilege of singular and eminent persons, not communicated to all the faithful, and is thought to be an admission to a nearer intercourse of secrecy with God, it is an effect of pride, and a mistake in judgment concerning the very same thing, which the old divines call the unitive way, if themselves that claim it understood the terms of art, and the consequents of their own intentions.

27. Only I shall observe one circumstance: That familiarity with God is nothing else but an admission to be of God's family, the admission of a servant, or a son in minority, and implies obedience, duty, and fear on our parts; care and providence, and love on God's part: and it is not the familiarity of sons, but the impudence of proud equals, to express this pretended privilege in even, unmannerly, and irreverent addresses and discourses: and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. The highest flames are the most tremulous; and so are the most holy and eminently religious persons more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility: so that, in true divinity and right speaking, there is no such thing as the unitive way of religion, save only in the effects of duty, obedience, and the expresses of the precise virtue of religion. Meditations in order to a good life, let them be as exalted as the capacity of the

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person and subject will endure, up to the height of contemplation; but if contemplation comes to be a distinct thing, and something besides or beyond a distinct degree of virtuous meditation, it is lost to all sense, and religion, and prudence. Let no man be hasty to eat of the fruits of paradise before his time.

28. And now I shall not need to enumerate the blessed fruits of holy meditation; for it is a grace, that is instrumental to all effects, to the production of all virtues, and the extinction of all vices; and, by consequence, the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost within us is the natural or proper emanation from the frequent exercise of this duty; only it hath something particularly excellent, besides its general influence: for meditation is that part of prayer, which knits the soul to its right object, and confirms and makes actual our intention and devotion. Meditation is the tongue of the soul, and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation, and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect; meditation being the soul of prayer, and the intention of our spirit. But, in all other things, meditation is the instrument and conveyance; it habituates our affections to heaven, it hath permanent content, it produces constancy of purpose, despising of things below, inflamed desires of virtue, love of God, self-denial, humility of understanding, and universal correction of our life and manners.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and eternal Jesus, whose whole life and doctrine was a perpetual sermon of holy life, a treasure of wisdom, and a repository of divine materials for meditation; give me grace to understand, diligence and attention to consider, care to lay up, and carefulness to reduce to practice, all those actions, discourses, and pious lessons, and intimations, by which thou didst expressly teach, or tacitly imply, or mysteriously signify, our duty. Let my understanding become as spiritual in its employment and purposes, as it is immaterial in its nature; fill my memory, as a vessel of election, with remembrances and notions highly compunctive, and greatly incentive of all the parts of sanctity. Let thy Holy Spirit dwell in my soul, instructing my knowledge, sanctifying my thoughts, guiding my affections, directing my will in the choice of virtue; that it may be the great employment of my life to meditate in thy law, to study thy preceptive will, to understand even the niceties and circumstantials of my duty; that ignorance may neither occasion a sin, nor become a punishment. Take from me all vanity of spirit, lightness of fancy, curiosity and impertinency of inquiry, illusions of the devil, and fantastic deceptions: let my thoughts be as my religion, plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent, and charitable; of great employment and force to the production of virtues and extermination of vice; but suffering no transportations of sense and vanity, nothing greater than the capacities of my soul, nothing that may minister to any intemperances of spirit; but let me be wholly inebriated with love; and that love wholly spent in doing such actions, as best please thee, in the conditions of my infirmity and the securities of humility, till thou shalt please to draw the curtain, and reveal thy interior beauties, in the kingdom of thine eternal glories: which grant, for thy mercy's sake, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

SECTION VI.

Of the Death of the Holy Innocents, or the Babes of Bethlehem, and the Flight of Jesus into Egypt.

1. ALL this while Herod waited for the return of the wise men, that they might give directions where the child did lie, and his sword might find him out with a certain and direct execution. But "when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was exceeding wroth." For it now began to deserve his trouble, when his purposes, which were most secret, began to be contradicted and diverted with a prevention, as if they were resisted by an all-seeing and almighty Providence. He began to suspect the hand of Heaven was in it; and saw there was nothing for his purposes to be acted, unless he could dissolve the golden chain of predestination. Herod believed the Divine oracles, foretelling that a king should be born in Bethlehem; and yet his ambition had made him so stupid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of Heaven. For, if he did not believe the prophecies, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how could he possibly hinder that event, which God had foretold himself would certainly bring to pass?

2. And, therefore, since God already had hindered him from the executions of a distinguishing sword, he resolved to send a sword of indiscrimination and confusion; hoping, that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young king's reign also should soon determine. He, therefore, "sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." For this execution was in the beginning of the second year after Christ's nativity, as in all probability we guess;[a] not at the two years' end, as some purpose: because as his malice was subtle, so he intended it should be secure; and though he had been diligent in his inquiry, and was near the time in his computation, yet he, that was never sparing in the lives of others, would now, to secure his kingdom, rather overact his severity for some months, than, by doing execution but just to the tittle of his account, hazard the escaping of the Messias.

[a] Sic ait Glossa ordinaria; sed Onuphrius in Fastis ait hanc cædem biennio post Christum natum contigisse.

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3. This execution was sad, cruel, and universal: no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the mothers, no tender-hearted soldier was employed, no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes and pity-begging looks of those mothers, that wondered how it was possible any person should hurt their pretty sucklings; no connivances there, no protections, or friendships, or consideration, or indulgences; but Herod caused, that his own child, which was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem, should bleed to death: which made Augustus Cæsar to say, that, "in Herod's house, it were better to be a hog than a child;"[b] because the custom of the nation did secure a hog from Herod's knife, but no religion could secure his child. The sword, being thus made sharp by Herod's commission, killed fourteen thousand pretty babes; as the Greeks, in their calendar, and the Abyssines of Ethiopia, do commemorate in their offices of liturgy. For Herod, crafty and malicious, that is, perfectly tyrant,[c] had caused all the children to be gathered together; which the credulous mothers (supposing it had been to take account of their age and number, in order to some taxing) hindered not, but unwittingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery.

4. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted." All the synonymas of sadness were little enough to express this great weeping, when fourteen thousand mothers, in one day, saw their pretty babes pouring forth their blood into that bosom, whence, not long before, they had sucked milk; and, instead of those pretty smiles which used to entertain the fancy and dear affections of their mothers, nothing but affrighting shrieks, and then ghastly looks. The mourning was great, like "the mourning in the valley of Hinnom, and there was no comforter;" their sorrow was too big to be cured, till it should lie down alone, and rest with its own weariness.

5. But the malice of Herod went also into the hill country; and hearing, that of John, the son of Zacharias, great things were spoken, by which he was designed to a great ministry about this young prince, he attempted in him also to rescind the prophecies, and sent a messenger of death towards him; but the mother's care had been early with him, and sent him into desert places, where he continued till the time appointed "of his manifestation unto Israel." But, as the children of Bethlehem died in the place of Christ, so did the father of the Baptist die for his child. For "Herod slew Zacharias between the temple and the altar," because he refused to betray his son to the fury of that rabid bear.[d] Though some persons, very eminent amongst the stars of the primitive church, report a tradition,[e] that a place being separated in the temple for virgins, Zacharias suffered the mother of our Lord to abide there after the birth of her holy Son, affirming her still to be a virgin; and that for this reason, not Herod, but the scribes and Pharisees, did kill Zacharias.

6. Tertullian reports,[f] that the blood of Zacharias had so besmeared the stones of the pavement, which was the altar, on which the good old priest was sacrificed, that no art or industry could wash the tincture out, the dye and guilt being both indelible; as if, because God did intend to exact of that nation "all the blood of righteous persons, from Abel to Zacharias," who was the last of the martyrs of the synagogue, he would leave a character of their guilt in their eyes, to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty, and infidelity. Some there are, who affirm these words of our blessed Saviour not to relate to any Zacharias, who had been already slain; but to be a prophecy of the last of all the martyrs of the Jews, who should be slain immediately before the destruction of the last temple, and the dissolution of the nation. Certain it is, that such a Zacharias, the son of Baruch, (if we may believe Josephus,[g]) was slain in the middle of the temple, a little before it was destroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophecy and reproof here made by our blessed Saviour, that, (from Abel to Zacharias,) should take in "all the righteous blood" from first to last, till the iniquity was complete; and it is not imaginable, that the blood of our blessed Lord, and of St. James their bishop, (for whose death, many of themselves thought, God destroyed their city,) should be left out of the account, which yet would certainly be left out, if any other Zacharias should be meant, than he whom they last slew: and in proportion to this, Cyprian de Valera expounds that, which we read in the past tense, to signify the future, "ye slew," i. e. "shall slay;" according to the style often used by prophets, and as the aorist of an uncertain signification will bear. But the first great instance of the Divine vengeance for these executions, was upon Herod, who, in very few years after, was smitten of God with so many plagues and tortures, that himself alone seemed like an hospital of the incurabili: for he was tormented with a soft, slow fire, like that of burning iron or the cinders of yew, in his body; in his bowels, with intolerable colics and ulcers; in his natural parts, with worms; in his feet, with gout; in his nerves, with convulsions, difficulty of breathing; and out of divers parts of his body issued out so impure and ulcerous a steam, that the loathsomeness, pain, and indignation, made him once to snatch a knife, with purpose to have killed himself; but that he was prevented by a nephew of his, that stood there in his attendance.

7. But as the flesh of beasts grows callous by

[b] Macrob. Saturnal. lib. ii. c. 4.

[c] Qualis apud Lucianum describitur Tyrannicid. Ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ τὴν φρουρὰν κρατύνων, ὁ τοὺς τυραννουμένους ἐκκόπτων, ὁ τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύοντας φοβῶν, ὁ τοὺς ἐφήβους ἀναστῶν, ὁ ἐνυβρίζων τοῖς γάμοις· ἐκείνῳ αἱ παρθένοι ἀνήγοντο· καὶ εἴ τίνες σφαγαί, καὶ εἴ τίνες φυγαί, καὶ χρημάτων ἀφαιρέσεις, καὶ βάσανοι, καὶ ὕβρεις, &c. —BIPONT. vol. iv. p. 311.

[d] Sic Chrysost. et Petrus Martyr. episc. Alexandr. Niceph. et Cedrenus.

[e] Sic aiunt Origen. tract. 23. in Evang. Matt. S. Basil. Homil. de Humana Christi Generatione. Nyssen. in Natali Christi. Cyril. adv. Anthropomorphitas.

[f] In Scorpiaco, cap. 8.

[g] Lib. iv.

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stripes and the pressure of the yoke; so did the heart of Herod, by the loads of Divine vengeance. God began his hell here; and the pains of hell never made any man less impious: for Herod, perceiving that he must now die,[h] first put to death his son Antipater, under pretence that he would have poisoned him; and that the last scene of his life might, for pure malice and exalted spite, outdo all the rest, because he believed the Jewish nation would rejoice at his death, he assembled all the nobles of the people, and put them in prison, giving in charge to his sister Salome, that, when he was expiring his last, all the nobility should be slain, that his death might be lamented with a perfect and universal sorrow.

8. But God, that brings to nought the counsels of wicked princes, turned the design against the intendment of Herod; for when he was dead, and could not call his sister to account for disobeying his most bloody and unrighteous commands, she released all the imprisoned and despairing gentlemen, and made the day of her brother's death a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, such as was that when the nation was delivered from the violence of Haman, in the days of Purim.

9. And, all this while, God had provided a sanctuary for the holy child Jesus. For God, seeing the secret purposes of blood which Herod had, sent his angel,[i] "who appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and fly into Egypt, and be thou there, until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him. Then he arose, and took the young Child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt." And they made their first abode in Hermopolis,[k] in the country of Thebais; whither, when they first arrived, the child Jesus, being by design or providence carried into a temple, all the statues of the idol-gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark, and suffered their timely and just dissolution and dishonour, according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, the Lord shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence."[l] And in the life of the prophet Jeremy, written by Epiphanius, it is reported, "that he told the Egyptian priests, that then their idols should be broken in pieces, when a holy virgin, with her child, should enter into their country:" which prophecy possibly might be the cause, that the Egyptians did, besides their vanities, worship also an infant in a manger, and a virgin in her bed.

10. From Hermopolis to Maturea went these holy pilgrims, in pursuance of their safety and provisions; where, it was reported, they dwelt in a garden of balsam, till Joseph, being, at the end of seven years, (as it is commonly believed,) ascertained by an angel of the death of Herod, and commanded to return to the land of Israel, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and returned. But hearing that Archelaus did reign in the place of his father, and knowing that the cruelty and ambition of Herod was hereditary, or entailed upon Archelaus, being also warned to turn aside into the parts of Galilee, which was of a distinct jurisdiction, governed indeed by one of Herod's sons, but not by Archelaus; thither he diverted; and there that holy family remained in the city of Nazareth, whence the holy Child had the appellative of a Nazarene.

[h] Δειναὶ γὰρ καὶ κοῖται ἀποιχομένοιο λέοντος.

[i] Matt. ii. 13.

Ad SECTION VI.

Considerations upon the Death of the Innocents, and the Flight of the Holy Jesus into Egypt.

1. HEROD, having called the wise men, and received information of their design, and the circumstances of the Child, pretended religion too, and desired them to bring him word when they had found the Babe, "that he might come and worship him;" meaning to make a sacrifice of him to whom he should pay his adoration; and, instead of investing the young Prince with a royal purple, he would have stained his swaddling-bands with his blood. It is ever dangerous, when a wicked prince pretends religion; his design is then foulest, by how much it needs to put on a fairer outside; but it was an early policy in the world, and it concerned men's interests, to seem religious, when they thought that to be so was an abatement of great designs. When Jezebel designed the robbing and destroying Naboth, she sent to the elders to proclaim a fast; for the external and visible remonstrances of religion leave in the spirits of men a great reputation of the seeming person, and therefore they will not rush into a furious sentence against his actions, at least not judge them with prejudice against the man, towards whom they are so fairly prepared, but do some violence to their own understanding, and either disbelieve their own reason, or excuse the fact, or think it but an error, or a less crime, or the incidences of humanity; or, however, are so long in decreeing against him, whom they think to be religious, that the rumour is abated, or the stream of indignation is diverted by other laborious arts, intervening before our zeal is kindled; and so the person is unjudged, or, at least, the design secured.

2. But in this, human policy was exceedingly infatuated: and though Herod had trusted his design to no keeper but himself, and had pretended fair, having religion for the word, and "called the wise men privately," and instructed them with no employment but a civil request, an account of the success of their journey, which they had no reason, or desire, to conceal; yet his heart was opened to the eye of Heaven, and the sun was not more visible, than his dark purpose was to God; and it succeeded accordingly: the Child was sent away, the wise men warned not to return, Herod was mocked and enraged; and so his craft became foolish and vain: and so are all counsels intended against God, or any thing, of which he himself hath undertaken the pro-

[k] Euseb. de Demonstr. c. 20. S. Athanas. lib. de Incarnat. Verbi. Palladius in Vita S. Apollon.

[l] Isa. xix. 1. Dorotheus in Synopsi. Pallad. in Vita Apollon.

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tection. For, although we understand not the reasons of security, because we see not that admirable concentring of infinite things in the Divine Providence, whereby God brings his purposes to act by ways unlooked for, and sometimes contradictory; yet the public and perpetual experience of the world hath given continual demonstrations, that all evil counsels have come to nought; that the succeeding of an impious design is no argument that the man is prosperous; that the curse is then surest, when his fortune spreads the largest; that the contradiction and impossibilities of deliverance to pious persons are but an opportunity and engagement for God to do wonders, and to glorify his power, and to exalt his mercy, by the instances of miraculous or extraordinary events. And as the afflictions, happening to good men, are alleviated by the support of God's good Spirit; and enduring them here are but consignations to an honourable amends hereafter; so the succeeding prosperities of fortunate impiety, when they meet with punishment in the next, or in the third age, or in the deletion of a people five ages after, are the greatest arguments of God's providence, who keeps wrath in store, and forgets not to "do judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong." It was laid up with God, and was perpetually in his eye, being the matter of a lasting, durable, and unremitted anger.

3. But God had care of the holy Child; he sent his angel to warn Joseph, with the Babe and his mother, to fly into Egypt. Joseph and Mary instantly arise; and without inquiry, how they shall live there, or when they shall return, or how be secured, or what accommodations they shall have in their journey, at the same hour of the night, begin the pilgrimage with the chearfulness of obedience, and the securities of faith, and the confidence of hope, and the joys of love, knowing themselves to be recompensed for all the trouble they could endure; that they were instruments of the safety of the holy Jesus; that they then were serving God; that they were encircled with the securities of the Divine Providence: and, in these dispositions, all places were alike; for every region was a paradise, where they were in company with Jesus. And, indeed, that man wants many degrees of faith and prudence, who is solicitous for the support of his necessities, when he is doing the commandment of God.[a] If he commands thee to offer a sacrifice, himself will provide a lamb, or enable thee to find out one; and he would remove thee into a state of separation, where thy body needs no supplies of provision, if he meant thou shouldest serve him without provisions. He will certainly take away thy need, or satisfy it;[b] he will feed thee himself, as he did the Israelites; or take away thy hunger, as he did to Moses; or send ravens to feed thee, as he did to Elias; or make charitable people minister to thee, as the widow to Elisha; or give thee his own portion, as he maintained the Levites; or make thine enemies to pity thee, as the Assyrians did the captive Jews. For whatsoever the world hath, and whatsoever can be conveyed by wonder or by providence, all that is thy security for provisions, so long as thou doest the work of God. And remember, that the assurance of blessing, and health, and salvation, is not made by doing what we list, or being where we desire, but by doing God's will, and being in the place of his appointment. We may be safe in Egypt, if we be there in obedience to God; and we may perish among the babes of Bethlehem, if we be there by our own election.

4. Joseph and Mary did not argue against the angel's message, because they had a confidence of their charge, who, with the breath of his mouth, could have destroyed Herod, though he had been abetted with all the legions, marching under the Roman eagles; but they, like the two cherubims about the propitiatory, took the Child between them, and fled, giving way to the fury of persecution, which possibly, when the materials were withdrawn, might expire, and die like fire, which else would rage for ever. Jesus fled, undertook a sad journey, in which the roughness of the ways, his own tenderness, the youth of his mother, the old age of his supposed father, the smallness of their viaticum and accommodation for their voyage, the no-kindred they were to go to, hopeless of comforts and exterior supplies, were so many circumstances of poverty, and lesser strokes of the persecution; things, that himself did choose to demonstrate the verity of his nature, the infirmity of his person, the humility of his spirit, the austerity of his undertaking, the burden of his charge; and by which he did teach us the same virtues he then expressed, and also consigned this permission to all his disciples, in future ages, that they also may fly from their persecutors, when the case is so, that their work is not done; that is, they may glorify God with their lives, more than with their death. And of this they are ascertained by the arguments of prudent account: for sometimes we are called to glorify God by dying, and the interest of the church and the faith of many may be concerned in it; then we must abide by it. In other cases it is true, that Demosthenes said, in apology for his own escaping from a lost field, "A man that runs away, may fight again."[c] And St. Paul made use of a guard of soldiers, to rescue him from the treachery of the Jewish rulers; and of a basket, to escape from the inquisition of the governor of Damascus; and the primitive christians, of grots and subterraneous retirements; and St. Athanasius, of a fair lady's house; and others, of deserts and graves; as knowing it was no shame to fly, when their Master himself had fled, that his time and his work might be fulfilled; and, when it was, he then laid his life down.

5. It is hard to set down particular rules, that may indefinitely guide all persons, in the stating of their own case; because all things, that depend upon circumstances, are alterable unto infinite. But as God's glory and the good of the church are the great considerations to be carried before us all the way, and in proportions to them we are to determine

[a] ——— τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχων τις ἂν φίλους, ἀρίστην μαντικὴν ἔχοι δόμοις.—EURIP. Helenâ. 766.

[b] Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

[c] Ἀνὴρ ὁ φεύγων καὶ πάλιν μαχήσεται.

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and judge our questions; so also our infirmities are allowable in the scrutiny: for I doubt not, but God intended it a mercy, and a compliance with human weakness, when he gave us this permission, as well as it was a design to secure the opportunities of his service, and the consummation of his own work by us. And since our fears, and the incommodities of flight, and the sadness of exile, and the insecurities and inconveniences of a strange and new abode, are part of the persecution; provided that God's glory be not certainly and apparently neglected, nor the church evidently scandalized by our flight; all interpretations of the question in favour of ourselves, and the declension of that part, which may tempt us to apostasy, or hazard our confidence, and the choosing the lesser part of the persecution, is not against the rule of faith, and always hath in it less glory, but oftentimes more security.

6. But thus far Herod's ambition transported him, even to resolutions of murder of the highest person, the most glorious and the most innocent upon earth; and it represents that passion to be the most troublesome and vexatious thing that can afflict the sons of men. Virtue hath not half so much trouble in it; it sleeps quietly, without startings and affrighting fancies; it looks cheerfully; smiles with much serenity; and, though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehensions of some faculty; it fears no man, nor no thing, nor is it discomposed; and hath no concernments in the great alterations of the world, and entertains death like a friend, and reckons the issues of it as the greatest of its hopes: but ambition is full of distractions; it teems with stratagems, as Rebecca with struggling twins; and is swelled with expectation, as with a tympany; and sleeps sometimes, as the wind in a storm, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast, till the cordage of his heart-strings crack; fears, when none is nigh; and prevents things, which never had intention; and falls under the inevitability of such accidents, which either could not be foreseen, or not prevented. It is an infinite labour to make a man's self miserable; and the utmost acquist is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his days full of sorrow, to enjoy the troubles of a three years' reign; for Herod lived but three years, or five at the most, after the flight of Jesus into Egypt. And therefore there is no greater unreasonableness in the world, than in the designs of ambition: for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublesome, and discontent, for the uncertain acquist of an honour, which nothing can secure; and, besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty than our life; and, when we are dead, all the world sees who was the fool. But it is a strange caitiveness and baseness of disposition of men, so furiously and unsatiably to run after perishing and uncertain interests, in defiance of all the reason and religion of the world; and yet to have no appetite to such excellencies, which satisfy reason, and content the spirit, and create great hopes, and ennoble our expectation, and are advantages to communities of men and public societies, and which all wise men teach, and all religion commands.

7. And it is not amiss to observe, how Herod vexed himself extremely upon a mistake.[d] The child Jesus was born a King, but it was a King of all the world; not confined within the limits of a province, like the weaker beauties of a torch, to shine in one room; but, like the sun, his empire was over all the world; and if Herod would have become but his tributary, and paid him the acknowledgments of his Lord, he should have had better conditions than under Cæsar, and yet have been as absolute in his own Jewry as he was before:[e] "His kingdom was not of this world;" and he, that gives heavenly kingdoms to all his servants, would not have stooped to have taken up Herod's petty coronet. But as it is a very vanity which ambition seeks, so it is a shadow, that disturbs and discomposes all its motions and apprehensions.

8. And the same mistake caused calamities to descend upon the church; for some of the persecutions commenced upon pretence christianity was an enemy to the government: but the pretence was infinitely unreasonable, and therefore had the fate of senseless allegations, it disbanded presently; for no external accident did so incorporate the excellency of Christ's religion into the hearts of men, as the innocency of the men, their inoffensive deportment, the modesty of their designs, their great humility and obedience, a life expressly in enmity and contestation against secular ambition. And it is to be feared, that the mingling human interests with religion, will deface the image Christ hath stamped upon it. Certain it is, the metal is much abated by so impure alloy, while the christian prince serves his end of ambition, and bears arms upon his neighbour's country, for the service of religion, making Christ's kingdom to invade Herod's rights: and, in the state ecclesiastical, secular interests have so deep a portion, that there are snares laid to tempt a persecution, and men are invited to sacrilege,[f] while the revenues of a church are a fair fortune for a prince. I make no scruple to find fault with painters, that picture the poor saints with rich garments; for though they deserved better, yet they had but poor ones: and some have been tempted to cheat the saint, not out of ill-will to his sanctity, but love to his shrine, and to the beauty of the clothes, with which some imprudent persons have, of old time, dressed their images. So it is in the fate of the church; persecution and the robes of Christ were

[d] Dubia pro certis solent timere reges.
SENEC. Œdip. 700.

[e] Hostis Herodes impie,
Christum venire quid times?
Non auferet terrestria,
Qui regna dat cœlestia.
Qui sceptra duro servus imperio regit,
Timet timentes, metus in authorem cadit.
SENEC. Œdip. 705.

[f] Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. ὥρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων, πυρὸς τροφὴ· καὶ ἀναθήματα, ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία· τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαρκῶς ἠδρασμένον, συνάπτει θεῷ.—HIEROCL.

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her portion and her clothing; and when she is dressed up in gaudy fortunes, it is no more than she deserves; but yet sometimes it is occasion, that the devil cheats her of her holiness, and the men of the world sacrilegiously cheat her of her riches; and then, when God hath reduced her to that poverty, he first promised and intended to her, the persecution ceases, and sanctity returns, and God curses the sacrilege, and stirs up men's minds to religious donatives; and all is well, till she grows rich again. And if it be dangerous in any man to be rich, and discomposes his steps in his journey to eternity; it is not then so proportionable to the analogy of Christ's poverty, and the inheritance of the church, to be sedulous in acquiring great temporalities, and putting princes in jealousy, and states into care for securities, lest all the temporal should run into ecclesiastical possession.

9. If the church have, by the active piety of a credulous, a pious, and less observant age, been endowed with great possessions, she hath rules enough, and poor enough, and necessities enough, to dispend what she hath with advantages to religion: but then all she gets by it is, the trouble of an unthankful, a suspected, and unsatisfying dispensation; and the church is made, by evil persons, a scene of ambition and stratagem;[g] and to get a German bishoprick is to be a prince; and to defend with niceness and suits of law every custom or lesser rite, even to the breach of charity and the scandal of religion, is called a duty: and every single person is bound to forgive injuries, and to quit his right rather than his charity; but if it is not a duty in the church also, in them whose life should be excellent to the degree of example, I would fain know, if there be not greater care taken to secure the ecclesiastical revenue, than the public charity and the honour of religion in the strict piety of the clergy; for as the not engaging in suits may occasion bold people to wrong the church, so the necessity of engaging is occasion of losing charity, and of great scandal. I find not fault with a free revenue of the church; it is, in some sense, necessary to governors, and to preserve the consequents of their authority: but I represent, that such things are occasion of much mischief to the church, and less holiness; and, in all cases, respect should be had to the design of christianity, to the prophecies of Jesus, to the promised lot of the church, to the dangers of riches, to the excellencies, and advantages, and rewards of poverty; and if the church have enough to perform all her duties and obligations cheerfully, let her, of all societies, be soonest content. If she have plenty, let her use it temperately and charitably; if she have not, let her not be querulous and troublesome. But however it would be thought upon, that though, in judging the quantum of the church's portion, the world thinks every thing too much, yet we must be careful we do not judge every thing too little; and if our fortune be safe between envy and contempt, it is much mercy. If it be despicable, it is safe for ecclesiastics, though it may be accidentally inconvenient or less profitable to others; but if it be great, public experience hath made remonstrance, that it mingles with the world, and dirties those fingers, which are instrumental in consecration and the more solemn rites of christianity.

10. Jesus fled from the persecution; as he did not stand it out, so he did not stand out against it. He was careful to transmit no precedent or encouragement of resisting tyrannous princes, when they offer violence to religion and our lives. He would not stand disputing for privileges, nor calling in auxiliaries from the Lord of hosts, who could have spared him many legions of angels, every single spirit being able to have defeated all Herod's power; but he knew, it was a hard lesson to learn patience, and all the excuses in the world would be sought out to discourage such a doctrine, by which we are taught to die, or lose all we have, or suffer inconveniences, at the will of a tyrant; we need no authentic examples, much less doctrines, to invite men to war, from which we see christian princes cannot be restrained with the engagements and peaceful theorems of an excellent and a holy religion, nor subjects kept from rebelling by the interests of all religions in the world, nor by the necessities and reasonableness of obedience, nor the endearments of all public societies of men; one word, or an intimation from Christ, would have sounded an alarm, and put us into postures of defence, when all Christ's excellent sermons, and rare exemplar actions, cannot tie our hands. But it is strange now, that, of all men in the world, christians should be such fighting people, or that christian subjects should lift up a thought against a christian prince, when they had no intimation of encouragement from their Master, but many from him to endear obedience, and humility, and patience, and charity; and these four make up the whole analogy, and represent the chief design and meaning of christianity, in its moral constitution.

11. But Jesus, when himself was safe, could also have secured the poor babes of Bethlehem, with thousands of diversions and avocations of Herod's purposes, or by discovering his own escape in some safe manner, not unknown to the Divine wisdom; but yet it did not so please God. He is Lord of his creatures, and hath absolute dominion over our lives, and he had an end of glory to serve upon these babes, and an end of justice upon Herod: and to the children he made such compensation, that they had no reason to complain, that they were so soon made stars, when they shone in their little orbs and participations of eternity: for so the sense of the church[h] hath been, that they having died the death of martyrs, though incapable of making

[g] Vide quæ dixit Ammian. Marcell. lib. xvii.; et Epistolas S. Gregorii M. lib. iv. ep. 32, 34, 36; et lib. vi. ep. 30; lib. vii. indict. 1, ep. 30; et Concil. Africanum, quo monitus est Cœlestinus papa, Ne fumosum typhum seculi in ecclesiam, quæ lucem simplicitatis et humilitatis diem Deum videre cupientibus præfert, videamur inducere.

[h] Ætas necdum habilis ad pugnam, idonea exstitit ad coronam; et ut appareret innocentes esse qui propter Christum necantur, infantia innocens occisa est.—S. CYPRIAN. Athenagoras dixit infantes resurrecturos, sed non venturos in judicium.

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the choice, God supplied the defects of their will by his own entertainment of the thing; that as the misery and their death, so also their glorification, might have the same author in the same manner of causality, even by a peremptory and unconditioned determination in these particulars. This sense is pious, and nothing unreasonable, considering that all circumstances of the thing make the case particular; but the immature death of other infants is a sadder story: for though I have no warrant or thought, that it is ill with them after death, and, in what manner or degree of well-being it is, there is no revelation; yet I am not of opinion, that the securing of so low a condition as theirs, in all reason, is like to be, will make recompence; or is an equal blessing with the possibilities of such an eternity, as is proposed to them, who, in the use of reason and a holy life, glorify God with a free obedience: and if it were otherwise, it were no blessing to live till the use of reason, and fools and babes were, in the best, because in the securest, condition, and certain expectation of equal glories.

12. As soon as Herod was dead, (for the Divine vengeance waited his own time for his arrest,) the angel presently brought Joseph word. The holy family was full of content and indifferency, not solicitous for return, not distrustful of the Divine Providence, full of poverty, and sanctity, and content, waiting God's time, at the return of which God delayed not to recall them from exile: "out of Egypt he called his Son," and directed Joseph's fear and course, that he should divert to a place in the jurisdiction of Philip, where the heir of Herod's cruelty, Archelaus, had nothing to do. And this very series of providence and care God expresses to all his sons by adoption; and will determine the time, and set bounds to every persecution, and punish the instruments, and ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietness to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctify it all, and give a crown at last, and all in his good time, if we wait the coming of the angel, and in the mean time do our duty with care, and sustain our temporals with indifferency: and, in all our troubles and displeasing accidents, we may call to mind, that God, by his holy and most reasonable providence, hath so ordered it, that the spiritual advantages we may receive from the holy use of such incommodities, are of great recompence and interest; and that, in such accidents, the holy Jesus, having gone before us in precedent, does go along with us by love and fair assistances; and that makes the present condition infinitely more eligible than the greatest splendour of secular fortune.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal God, who didst suffer thy holy Son to fly from the violence of an enraged prince, and didst choose to defend him in the ways of his infirmity by hiding himself, and a voluntary exile; be thou a defence to all thy faithful people, whenever persecution arises against them; send them the ministry of angels to direct them into ways of security, and let thy Holy Spirit guide them in the paths of sanctity, and let thy providence continue in custody over their persons, till the times of refreshment and the day of redemption shall return. Give, O Lord, to thy whole church sanctity and zeal, and the confidences of a holy faith, boldness of confession, humility, content, and resignation of spirit, generous contempt of the world, and unmingled desires of thy glory and the edification of thy elect; that no secular interests disturb her duty, or discompose her charity, or depress her hopes, or, in any unequal degree, possess her affections, and pollute her spirit: but preserve her from the snares of the world and the devil, from the rapine and greedy desires of sacrilegious persons; and, in all conditions, whether of affluence or want, may she still promote the interests of religion: that, when plenteousness is within her palaces, and peace in her walls, that condition may then be best for her; and when she is made as naked as Jesus to his passion, then poverty may be best for her: that, in all estates, she may glorify thee; and, in all accidents and changes, thou mayest sanctify and bless her, and at last bring her to the eternal riches and abundance of glory, where no persecution shall disturb her rest. Grant this for sweet Jesus' sake, who suffered exile and hard journeys, and all the inconveniences of a friendless person, in a strange province; to whom, with thee and the eternal Spirit, be glory for ever, and blessing in all generations of the world, and for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION VII.

Of the younger Years of Jesus, and his Disputation with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. FROM the return of this holy family to Judea, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the blessed child Jesus was twelve years of age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentic record; but that they went to Jerusalem, every year, at the feast of the Passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old, and was in the holy city, attending upon the paschal rites and solemn sacrifices of the law, his parents, having fulfilled their days of festivity, went homeward, supposing the Child had been in the caravan, among his friends; and so they erred for the space of a whole day's journey; "and when they sought him, and found him not, they returned to Jerusalem," full of fears and sorrow.

2. No fancy can imagine the doubts, the apprehensions, the possibilities of mischief, and the tremblings of heart, which the holy virgin mother felt thronging about her fancy and understanding, but such a person, who hath been tempted to the danger of a violent fear and transportation, by apprehension of the loss of a hope greater than a miracle; her

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discourses with herself could have nothing of distrust, but much of sadness and wonder; and the indetermination of her thoughts was a trouble great as the passion of her love. Possibly an angel might have carried him, she knew not whither; or, it may be, the son of Herod had gotten the prey, which his cruel father missed; or he was sick, or detained out of curiosity and wonder, or any thing, but what was right. And by this time she was come to Jerusalem; and having spent three days in her sad and holy pursuit of her lost jewel, despairing of the prosperous event of any human diligence, as, in all other cases, she had accustomed, she made her address to God; and entering into the temple to pray, God, that knew her desires, prevented her with the blessings of goodness; and there her sorrow was changed into joy and wonder; for there she found her holy Son, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions."

3. "And, when they saw him, they were amazed," and so were "all that heard him, at his understanding and answers;" beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common spirits of the best men, discoursing up to the height of a prophet, with the clearness of an angel, and the infallibility of inspiration: for here it was verified, in the highest and most literal signification, that, "out of the mouths of babes God had ordained strength;" but this was the strength of argument, and science of the highest mysteries of religion and secret philosophy.

4. Glad were the parents of the Child to find him illustrated with a miracle, concerning which, when he had given them such an account, which they understood not, but yet Mary laid up in her heart, as that this was part of his employment and his Father's business, "he returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents;" where he lived in all holiness and humility, showing great signs of wisdom, endearing himself to all that beheld his conversation; did nothing less than might become the great expectation, which his miraculous birth had created of him; for "he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man," still growing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of demeanour, and excellency of understanding.

5. They that love to serve God in hard questions, use to dispute, whether Christ did, truly, or in appearance only, increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the Word, and being the eternal wisdom of the Father, it seemed to them, that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole person, as to the Divine nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story, which equally affirms Christ as properly to have "increased in favour with God as with man, in wisdom as in stature," they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of human nature, to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections: and, although the humanity of Christ made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications which were imparted to his inferior nature; and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of wisdom upon the humanity for a time, as he did the beatifical vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the interval of his sad and dolorous passion. But, whether it were truly or in appearance, in habit or in exercise of act, by increase of notion or experience, it is certain the promotions of the holy Child were great, admirable, and as full of wonder as of sanctity, and sufficient to entertain the hopes and expectations of Israel with preparations and dispositions, as to satisfy their wonder for the present, so to accept him at the time of his publication; they having no reason to be scandalized at the smallness, improbability, and indifferency, of his first beginnings.

6. But the holy Child had also an employment, which he undertook in obedience to his supposed father, for exercise and example of humility, and for the support of that holy family, which was dear in the eyes of God, but not very splendid by the opulency of a free and indulgent fortune. He wrought in the trade of a carpenter; and when Joseph died, which happened before the manifestation of Jesus unto Israel, he wrought alone, and was no more called the carpenter's son, but the carpenter himself. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary;"[i] said his offended countrymen. And in this condition the blessed Jesus did abide, till he was thirty years old; for he, that came to fulfil the law, would not suffer one tittle of it to pass unaccomplished; for, by the law of the nation and custom of the religion, no priest was to officiate, or prophet was to preach, before he was thirty years of age.

[i] Mark vi. 3.

Ad SECTION VII.

Considerations upon the Disputation of Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. JOSEPH and Mary, being returned unto Nazareth, were sedulous to enjoy the privileges of their country, the opportunities of religion, the public address to God, in the rites of festivals and solemnities of the temple: they had been long grieved with the impurities and idol rites, which they, with sorrow, had observed to be done in Egypt; and, being deprived of the blessings of those holy societies and employments they used to enjoy in Palestine, at their return came to the offices of their religion with appetites of fire, and keen as the evening wolf; and all the joys, which they should have received in respersion and distinct emanations, if they had kept their anniversaries at Jerusalem, all that united they received in the duplication of their joys at their return, and in the fulfilling themselves with the refection and holy viands of religion. For so God uses to satisfy the longings of holy people, when a persecution has shut up the beautiful gates of the temple, or denied to them opportunities of access: although God hears the prayers they make with their windows towards Jerusalem, with their hearts

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opened with desires of the public communions, and sends them a prophet with a private meal, as Habakkuk came to Daniel; yet he fills their hearts, when the year of jubilee returns, and the people sing "In convertendo," the song of joy for their redemption. For as, of all sorrows, the deprivations and eclipses of religion are the saddest, and of the worst and most inconvenient consequence; so, in proportion, are the joys of spiritual plenty and religious returns; the communion of saints being like the primitive corban, a repository to feed all the needs of the church, or like a taper joined to a torch, itself is kindled, and increases the other's flames.

2. They failed not to go to Jerusalem: for all those holy prayers and ravishments of love, those excellent meditations and intercourses with God, their private readings and discourses, were but entertainments and satisfaction of their necessities, they lived with them during their retirements; but it was a feast when they went to Jerusalem, and the freer and more indulgent refection of the Spirit; for, in public solemnities, God opens his treasures, and pours out his grace, more abundantly. Private devotions, and secret offices of religion, are like refreshing of a garden with the distilling and petty drops of a water-pot; but addresses to the temple, and serving God in the public communion of saints, is like rain from heaven, where the offices are described by a public spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages by the adunations and symbols of charity, and increment by their distinct title to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of public observation, and the engagements of holy customs.[a] For religion is a public virtue; it is the ligature of souls, and the great instrument of the conservation of bodies politic; and is united in a common object, the God of all the world, and is managed by public ministries, by sacrifice, adoration, and prayer, in which, with variety of circumstances indeed, but with infinite consent and union of design, all the sons of Adam are taught to worship God; and it is a publication of God's honour, its very purpose being to declare to all the world, how great things God hath done for us, whether in public donatives or private missives; so that the very design, temper, and constitution of religion, is to be a public address to God: and although God is present in closets, and there also distils his blessings in small rain; yet to the societies of religion and publication of worship, as we are invited by the great blessings and advantages of communion, so also we are, in some proportions, more straitly limited by the analogy and exigence of the duty.[b] It is a persecution, when we are forced from public worshippings; no man can hinder our private addresses to God; every man can build a chapel in his breast, and himself be the priest, and his heart the sacrifice, and every foot of glebe he treads on be the altar; and this no tyrant can prevent. If, then, there can be persecution in the offices of religion, it is the prohibition of public profession and communions; and therefore he, that denies to himself the opportunities of public rites and conventions, is his own persecutor.

3. But when Jesus was "twelve years old," and his parents had finished their offices, and returned filled with the pleasures of religion, they missed the Child, and "sought him amongst their kindred," but there "they found him not;" for whoever seeks Jesus, must seek him in the offices of religion, in the temple, not amongst the engagements and pursuit of worldly interests: "I forgat also mine own father's house," said David, the father of this holy Child; and so must we, when we run in an inquiry after the Son of David. But our relinquishing must not be a dereliction of duty, but of engagement: our affections toward kindred must always be with charity, and according to the endearments of our relation, but without immersion, and such adherences, as either contradict or lessen our duty towards God.

4. It was a sad effect of their pious journey, to lose the joy of their family, and the hopes of all the world: but it often happens, that, after spiritual employments, God seems to absent himself, and withdraw the sensible effects of his presence, that we may seek him with the same diligence, and care, and holy fears, with which the holy virgin mother sought the blessed Jesus. And it is a design of great mercy in God, to take off the light from the eyes of a holy person, that he may not be abused with complacencies, and too confident opinions and reflections, upon his fair performances. For we usually judge of the well or ill of our devotions and services, by what we feel; and we think God rewards every thing in the present, and by proportion to our own expectations; and if we feel a present rejoicing of spirit, all is well with us; the smoke of the sacrifice ascended right in a holy cloud: but if we feel nothing of comfort, then we count it a prodigy and ominous, and we suspect ourselves; and most commonly we have reason. Such irradiations of cheerfulness are always welcome; but it is not always anger that takes them away; the cloud removed from before the camp of Israel, and stood before the host of Pharaoh; but this was a design of ruin to the Egyptians, and of security to Israel: and, if those bright angels, that go with us to direct our journeys, remove out of our sight, and stand behind us, it is not always an argument, that the anger of the Lord is gone out against us; but such decays of sense and clouds of spirit are excellent conservators of humility, and restrain those intemperances and vainer thoughts, which we are prompted to, in the gaiety of our spirits.

5. But we often give God cause to remove, and,

[a] Habet semper privilegium suum, ut sacratius fiat quod publicâ lege celebratur, quàm quod privatâ institutione dependitur.—LEO de Jejun. 7. Mensis. Publica præferenda sunt privatis, et tunc est efficacior sanctiorque devotio, quando in operibus pietatis totius ecclesiæ unus est animus et unus sensus.—Idem, Serm. 4.

[b] Heb. x. 25.

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for a while, to absent himself: and his doing of it sometimes, upon the just provocations of our demerits, makes us, at other times, with good reason, to suspect ourselves, even in our best actions. But sometimes we are vain, or remiss; or pride invades us in the darkness and incuriousness of our spirits; and we have a secret sin, which God would have us to inquire after; and, when we suspect every thing, and condemn ourselves with strictest and most angry sentence, then, it may be, God will, with a ray of light, break through the cloud; if not, it is nothing the worse for us: for, although the visible remonstrance and face of things, in all the absences and withdrawings of Jesus, be the same, yet, if a sin be the cause of it, the withdrawing is a taking away his favour and his love; but, if God does it to secure thy piety, and to inflame thy desires, or to prevent a crime, then he withdraws a gift only, nothing of his love, and yet the darkness of the spirit and sadness seem equal. It is hard, in these cases, to discover the cause, as it is nice to judge the condition, of the effect; and therefore it is prudent to ascertain our condition, by improving our care and our religion; and, in all accidents, to make no judgment concerning God's favour by what we feel, but by what we do.

6. When the holy Virgin, with much religion and sadness, had sought her joy, at last she "found him, disputing among the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions;" and besides, that he now first opened a fontinel, and there sprang out an excellent rivulet from his abyss of wisdom, he consigned this truth to his disciples: That they, who mean to be doctors and teach others, must, in their first accesses and degrees of discipline, learn of those, whom God and public order hath set over us, in the mysteries of religion.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed and most holy Jesus, fountain of grace and comfort, treasure of wisdom and spiritual emanations, be pleased to abide with me for ever, by the inhabitation of thy interior assistances and refreshments; and give me a corresponding love, acceptable and unstained purity, care, and watchfulness over my ways, that I may never, by provoking thee to anger, cause thee to remove thy dwelling, or draw a cloud before thy holy face: but if thou art pleased, upon a design of charity or trial, to cover my eyes, that I may not behold the bright rays of thy favour, nor be refreshed with spiritual comforts; let thy love support my spirit by ways insensible; and, in all my needs, give me such a portion, as may be instrumental and incentive to performance of my duty: and, in all accidents, let me continue to seek thee by prayers and humiliation, and frequent desires, and the strictness of a holy life; that I may follow thy example, pursue thy footsteps, be supported by thy strength, guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy favour, and may, at last, after a persevering holiness and an unwearied industry, dwell with thee in the regions of light and eternal glory, where there shall be no fears of parting from the habitations of felicity, and the union and fruition of thy presence, O blessed and most holy Jesus. Amen.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Preaching of John the Baptist, preparative to the Manifestation of Jesus.

WHEN Herod had drunk so great a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and sought for more from the hill country, Elizabeth carried her son into the wilderness, there, in the desert places and recesses, to hide him from the fury of that beast, where she attended him with as much care and tenderness, as the affections and fears of a mother could express, in the permission of those fruitless solitudes. The child was about eighteen months old, when he first fled to sanctuary;[a] but, after forty days, his mother died; and his father Zacharias, at the time of his ministration, which happened about this time, was killed in the court of the temple; so that the child was exposed to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of solitariness and discomfort, in a time when a bloody king endeavoured his destruction. But, "when his father and mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up." For, according to the tradition of the Greeks,[b] God deputed an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, as he had formerly done to Ishmael,[c] who dwelt in the wilderness; and to Elias,[d] when he fled from the rage of Ahab; so to this child, who came in the spirit of Elias, to make demonstration, that there can be no want, where God undertakes the care and provision.

2. The entertainment, that St. John's proveditóre, the angel, gave him, was such as the wilderness did afford, and such as might dispose him to a life of austerity; for there he continued spending his time in meditations, contemplation, prayer, affections and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey, not clothed in soft, but a hairy garment,[e] and a leathern girdle, till he was thirty years of age. And then, "being the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, the word of God came unto John in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching" and baptizing.

3. This John, according to the prophecies of him, and designation of his person by the Holy Ghost, was the forerunner of Christ, sent to dispose the people for his entertainment, and "prepare his ways;" and therefore it was necessary his person should be so extraordinary and full of sanctity, and

[a] Niceph. lib. i. c. 14.
[b] S. Chrys. Hom. de Nativ. S. Jo. Baptistæ.
[c] Gen. xxi. 17. [d] 1 Kings xix. 5.

[e] Vestis erat curvi setis conserta cameli,
Contrà luxuriem molles duraret ut artus,
Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.—PAULIN.

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so clarified by great concurrences and wonder in the circumstances of his life, as might gain credit and reputation to the testimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the Saviour of the world. And so it happened.

4. For as the Baptist, while he was in the wilderness, became the pattern of solitary and contemplative life, a school of virtue, and example of sanctity and singular austerity; so, at his emigration from the places of his retirement, he seemed, what indeed he was, a rare and excellent personage: and the wonders, which were great, at his birth, the prediction of his conception by an angel, which never had before happened but in the persons of Isaac and Samson, the contempt of the world, which he bore about him, his mortified countenance and deportment, his austere and eremitical life, his vehement spirit and excellent zeal in preaching, created so great opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a prophet in his office, for a heavenly person in his own particular, and a rare example of sanctity and holy life to all others: and all this being made solemn and ceremonious by his baptism, he prevailed so, that he made excellent and apt preparations for the Lord's appearing; for "there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins."

5. The Baptist having, by so heavenly means, won upon the affections of all men, his sermons and his testimony concerning Christ were the more likely to be prevalent and accepted; and the sum of them was "repentance and dereliction of sins," and "bringing forth the fruits of good life;" in the promoting of which doctrine, he was a severe reprehender of the Pharisees and Sadducees; he exhorted the people to works of mercy; the publicans to do justice and to decline oppression; the soldiers to abstain from plundering, and doing violence or rapine: and publishing, that "he was not the Christ; that he only baptized with water, but the Messias should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" he finally denounced judgment and great severities to all the world of impenitents, even abscission and fire unquenchable. And from this time forward, viz. "From the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." For now the gospel began to dawn, and John was like the morning star, or the blushings springing from the windows of the east, foretelling the approach of the Sun of righteousness: and as St. John Baptist laid the first rough, hard, and unhewn stone of this building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections; so it was continued by the Master-builder himself, who propounded the glories of the crown of the heavenly kingdom to them only who should climb the cross to reach it. Now it was, that multitudes should throng, and crowd to enter in at the strait gate, and press into the kingdom; and the younger brothers should snatch the inheritance from the elder, the unlikely from the more likely, the gentiles from the Jews, the strangers from the natives, the publicans and harlots from the scribes and Pharisees, who, like violent persons, shall, by their importunity, obedience, watchfulness, and diligence, snatch the kingdom from them, to whom it was first offered; and "Jacob shall be loved, and Esau rejected."

Ad SECTION VIII.

Considerations upon the Preaching of John the Baptist.

1. FROM the disputation of Jesus with the doctors to the time of his manifestation to Israel, which was eighteen years, the holy Child dwelt in Nazareth, in great obedience to his parents, in exemplar modesty, singular humility; working with his hands in his supposed father's trade, for the support of his own and his mother's necessities, and that he might bear the curse of Adam, that, "in the sweat of his brows he should eat his bread:" all the while, "he increased in favour with God and man," sending forth excellent testimonies of a rare spirit and a wise understanding in the temperate instances of such a conversation, to which his humility and great obedience had engaged him. But, all this while, the stream ran under ground: and though little bubblings were discerned in all the course, and all the way men looked upon him as upon an excellent person, diligent in his calling, wise and humble, temperate and just, pious and rarely tempered; yet, at the manifestation of John the Baptist, he brake forth like the stream from the bowels of the earth, or the sun from a cloud, and gave us a precedent, that we should not show our lights to minister to vanity, but then only, when God, and public order, and just dispositions of men, call for a manifestation: and yet the ages of men have been so forward in prophetical ministries, and to undertake ecclesiastical employment, that the viciousness, and indiscretions, and scandals, the church of God feels as great burdens upon the tenderness of her spirit, are, in great part, owing to the neglect of this instance of the prudence and modesty of the holy Jesus.

2. But now the time appointed was come; the Baptist comes forth upon the theatre of Palestine, a forerunner of the office and publication of Jesus, and, by the great reputation of his sanctity, prevailed upon the affections and judgment of the people, who, with much ease, believed his doctrine, when they had reason to approve his life; for the good example of the preacher is always the most prevailing homily, his life is his best sermon. He, that will raise affections in his auditory, must affect their eyes; for we seldom see the people weep, if the orator laughs loud and loosely: and there is no reason to think, that his discourse should work more with me than himself. If his arguments be fair and specious, I shall think them fallacies, while they have not faith with him; and what necessity for me to be temperate, when he that tells

me so, sees no such need, but hopes to go to heaven without it? or, if the duty be necessary, I shall learn the definition of temperance, and the latitudes of my permission, and the bounds of lawful and unlawful, by the exposition of his practice: if he binds a burden upon my shoulders, it is but reason I should look for him to bear his portion too. "Good works convince more than miracles;" [a] and the power of ejecting devils is not so great probation, that christian religion came from God, as is the holiness of the doctrine, and its efficacy and productions upon the hearty professors of the institution. St. Pachomius, when he wore the military girdle under Constantine the emperor, came to a city of christians, who, having heard that the army, in which he then marched, was almost starved for want of necessary provisions, of their own charity relieved them speedily and freely. He, wondering at their so free and cheerful dispensation, inquired what kind of people these were, whom he saw so bountiful. It was answered, they were christians, whose profession it is to hurt no man, and to do good to every man. The pleased soldier was convinced of the excellency of that religion, which brought forth men so good and so pious, and loved the mother for the children's sake; threw away his girdle, and became christian, and religious, and a saint. And it was Tertullian's great argument in behalf of christians, "See how they love one another, how every man is ready to die for his brother:" it was a living argument, and a sensible demonstration, of the purity of the fountain, from whence such limpid waters did derive. But so John the Baptist made himself a fit instrument of preparation; and so must all the christian clergy be fitted for the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus.

3. The Baptist had, till this time, that is, about thirty years, lived in the wilderness under the discipline of the Holy Ghost, under the tuition of angels, in conversation with God, in great mortification and disaffections to the world, his garments rugged and uneasy, his meat plain, necessary, and without variety, his employment prayers and devotion, his company wild beasts, in ordinary, in extraordinary, messengers from heaven; and all this, not undertaken of necessity to subdue a bold lust, or to punish a loud crime, but to become more holy and pure from the lesser stains and insinuations of too free infirmities, and to prepare himself for the great ministry of serving the holy Jesus in his publication. Thirty years he lived in great austerity; and it was a rare patience and exemplar mortification: we use not to be so pertinacious in any pious resolutions, but our purposes disband upon the sense of the first violence; we are free and confident of resolving to fast, when our bellies are full;[b] but, when we are called upon by the first necessities of nature, our zeal is cool, and dissoluble into air, upon the first temptation; and we are not upheld in the violences of a short austerity without faintings and repentances to be repented of, and "inquirings after the vow is past," and searching for excuses and desires to reconcile our nature and our conscience; unless our necessity be great, and our sin clamorous, and our conscience laden, and no peace to be had without it; and it is well, if upon any reasonable grounds, we can be brought to suffer contradictions of nature, for the advantages of grace. But it would be remembered, that the Baptist did more upon a less necessity; and, possibly, the greatness of the example may entice us on a little farther than the customs of the world, or our own indevotions, would engage us.

4. But, after the expiration of a definite time, John came forth from his solitude, and served God in societies. He served God, and the content of his own spirit, by his conversing with angels, and dialogues with God, so long as he was in the wilderness; and it might be some trouble to him to mingle with the impurities of men, amongst whom he was sure to observe such recesses from perfection, such violation of all things sacred, so great despite done to all ministries of religion, that to him, who had no experience or neighbourhood of actions criminal, it must needs be to his sublimed and clarified spirit more punitive and afflictive, than his hairen shirt and his ascetic diet was to his body; but now himself, that tried both, was best able to judge, which state of life was of greatest advantage and perfection.

5. "In his solitude he did breathe more pure inspiration; heaven was more open, God was more familiar," [c] and frequent in his visitations. In the wilderness his company was angels, his employment meditations and prayer, his temptations simple and from within, from the impotent and lesser rebellions of a mortified body, his occasions of sin as few as his examples, his condition such, that, if his soul were at all busy, his life could not easily be other than the life of angels; for his work and recreation, and his visits, and his retirements, could be nothing but the variety and differing circumstances of his piety: his inclinations to society made it necessary for him to repeat his addresses to God; for his being a sociable creature, and yet in solitude, made that his conversing with God, and being partaker of Divine communications, should be the satisfaction of his natural desires, and the supply of his singularity and retirement; the discomforts of which made it natural for him to seek out for some refreshment, and, therefore, to go to heaven for it, he having rejected the solaces of the world already. And all this, besides the innocencies of his silence, [d] which is very great, and to be judged of in proportion to the infinite extravagancies of our language, there being no greater perfection here to be expected, [e] than "not to offend in our tongue." "It was solitude and retirement in which Jesus kept his vigils; the desert

[a] S. Chrys. Orat. de S. Babyla.

[b] Satiatis et expletis jucundius est carere quàm frui.—CICERO de Senect. c. 47.

[c] In solitudine aër purior, cœlum apertius, familiarior Deus.—ORIG.

[d] Πολλοῖς γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φάρμακον κακῶν σιγὴ, μάλιστα δ' ἐστὶ σώφρονος τρόπου σημεῖον.—CARCINUS.

[e] James iii. Petrus Cellensis, lib. iv. ep. 12.

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places heard him pray; in a privacy he was born; in the wilderness he fed his thousands; upon a mountain apart he was transfigured; upon a mountain he died; and from a mountain he ascended to his Father:" in which retirements his devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumstances, and himself in such dispositions twice had the opportunities of glory.

6. And yet, after all these excellencies, the Spirit of God called the Baptist forth to a more excellent ministry: for, in solitude, pious persons might go to heaven by the way of prayers and devotion; but, in society, they might go to heaven by the way of mercy, and charity, and dispensations to others. In solitude, there are fewer occasions of vices, but there is also the exercise of fewer virtues; and the temptations, though they be not from many objects, yet are, in some circumstances, more dangerous; not only because the worst of evils, spiritual pride,[f] does seldom miss to creep upon those goodly oaks, like ivy, and suck their heart out, and a great mortifier without some complacencies in himself, or affectations or opinions, or something of singularity, is almost as unusual as virgin purity and unstained thoughts in the bordelli; (St. Hierom had tried it, and found it so by experience, and he it was that said so;) but also, because whatsoever temptation does invade such retired persons, they have privacies enough to act it in,[g] and no eyes upon them but the eye of Heaven, no shame to encounter withal, no fears of being discovered: and we know by experience, that a witness of our conversation is a great restraint to the inordination of our actions. Men seek out darknesses and secrecies to commit a sin; "and the evil, that no man sees, no man reproves; and that makes the temptation bold and confident, and the iniquity easy and ready:" so that, as they have not so many tempters as they have abroad, so neither have they so many restraints; their vices are not so many, but they are more dangerous in themselves, and to the world safe and opportune. And as they communicate less with the world, so they do less charity, and fewer offices of mercy: no sermons there but when solitude is made popular, and the city removes into the wilderness; no comforts of a public religion, or visible remonstrances of the communion of saints; and of all the kinds of spiritual mercy, only one can there properly be exercised; and, of the corporal, none at all. And this is true in lives and institutions of less retirement, in proportion to the degree of the solitude: and, therefore, church-story reports of divers very holy persons, who left their wildernesses and sweetnesses of devotion in their retirement, to serve God in public by the ways of charity and exterior offices. Thus St. Antony and Acepsamas came forth to encourage the fainting people to contend to death for the crown of martyrdom;[h] and Aphraates, in the time of Valens, the Arian emperor, came abroad to assist the church, in the suppressing the flames kindled by the Arian faction. And, upon this ground, they that are the greatest admirers of eremitical life, call the episcopal function "the state of perfection," and a degree of ministerial and honorary excellence beyond the pieties and contemplations of solitude, because of the advantages of gaining souls, and religious conversation, and going to God by doing good to others.

7. John the Baptist united both these lives; and our blessed Saviour, who is the great precedent of sanctity and prudence, hath determined this question in his own instance; for he lived a life common, sociable, humane, charitable, and public; and yet, for the opportunities of especial devotion, retired to prayer and contemplation, but came forth speedily; for the devil never set upon him but in the wilderness, and by the advantage of retirement. For as God hath many, so the devil hath some, opportunities of doing his work in our solitariness. But Jesus reconciled both; and so did John the Baptist, in several degrees and manners:[i] and from both we are taught, that solitude is a good school, and the world is the best theatre; the institution is best there, but the practice here; the wilderness hath the advantage of discipline, and society opportunities of perfection; privacy is the best for devotion, and the public for charity. In both, God hath many saints and servants; and from both, the devil hath had some.

8. His sermon was an exhortation to repentance and a holy life: he gave particular schedules of duty to several states of persons; sharply reproved the Pharisees for their hypocrisy and impiety; it being worse in them, because contrary to their rule, their profession, and institution; gently guided others into the ways of righteousness, calling them "the straight ways of the Lord," that is, the direct and shortest way to the kingdom; for of all lines the straight is the shortest, and as every angle is a turning out of the way, so every sin is an obliquity, and interrupts the journey. By such discourses, and a baptism, he disposed the spirits of men for the entertaining the Messias, and the homilies of the gospel. For John's doctrine was to the sermons of Jesus, as a preface to a discourse; and his baptism was to the new institution and discipline of the kingdom, as the vigils to a holy day; of the same kind, in a less degree. But the whole economy of it represents to us, that repentance is the first intromission into the sanctities of christian religion. The Lord treads upon no paths, that are not hallowed and made smooth by the sorrows and cares of contrition, and the impedi-

[f] In solitudine citò obrepit superbia. Ep. 4.

[g] Non minorem flagitiis occasionem secreta præbuerint.—QUINT.
Maxima pars peccatorum tollitur, si peccaturis testis assistat.—SENEC.
Malum quod nemo videt, nemo arguit; ubi non timetur reprehensor, securiùs accedit tentator, et liberiùs perpetratur iniquitas.—S. BERN.

[h] Euseb. Hist. lib. vi. c. 3. Theod. lib. iv. c. 23, 24. Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat acceptius, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur.—CICER. Somn. Scipion. c. 4.

[i] Ὁ Ἰωάννης φιλέρημος, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἥμερος καὶ τιθασσὸς καὶ ἀγελαῖος.

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ments of sin cleared by dereliction and the succeeding fruits of emendation. But as it related to the Jews, his baptism did signify, by a cognation to their usual rites and ceremonies of ablution, and washing gentile proselytes, that the Jews had so far receded from their duty and that holiness, which God required of them by the law, that they were in the state of strangers, no better than heathens; and, therefore, were to be treated, as themselves received gentile proselytes, by a baptism and a new state of life, before they could be fit for the reception of the Messias, or be admitted to his kingdom.

9. It was an excellent sweetness of religion, that had entirely possessed the soul of the Baptist, that in so great reputation of sanctity, so mighty concourse of people, such great multitudes of disciples and confidents, and such throngs of admirers, he was humble without mixtures of vanity, and confirmed in his temper and piety against the strength of the most impetuous temptation. And he was tried to some purpose: for when he was tempted to confess himself to be the Christ, he refused it; or to be Elias, or to be accounted "that prophet," he refused all such great appellatives, and confessed himself only to be "a voice," the lowest of entities, whose being depends upon the speaker, just as himself did upon the pleasure of God, receiving form, and publication, and employment, wholly by the will of his Lord, in order to the manifestation of "the Word eternal." It were well, that the spirits of men would not arrogate more than their own, though they did not lessen their own just dues. It may concern some end of piety or prudence, that our reputation be preserved by all just means; but never, that we assume the dues of others, or grow vain by the spoils of an undeserved dignity. Honours are the rewards of virtue, or engagement upon offices of trouble and public use; but then they must suppose a preceding worth, or a fair employment. But he that is a plagiary of others' titles or offices, and dresses himself with their beauties, hath no more solid worth or reputation, than he should have nutriment, if he ate only with their mouth, and slept their slumbers, himself being open and unbound in all the regions of his senses.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and most glorious God, who, before the publication of thy eternal Son, the Prince of Peace, didst send thy servant, John Baptist, by the examples of mortification, and the rude austerities of a penitential life, and by the sermons of penance, to remove all the impediments of sin, that the ways of his Lord and ours might be made clear, ready, and expedite; be pleased to let thy Holy Spirit lead me in the straight paths of sanctity, without deflections to either hand, and without the interruption of deadly sin; that I may, with facility, zeal, assiduity, and a persevering diligence, walk in the ways of the Lord. Be pleased, that the axe may be laid to the root of sin, that the whole body of it may be cut down in me; that no fruit of Sodom may grow up to thy displeasure. Thoroughly purge the floor and granary of my heart with thy fan, with the breath of thy Diviner Spirit, that it may be a holy repository of graces, and full of benediction and sanctity; that when our Lord shall come, I may at all times be prepared for the entertainment of so divine a guest, apt to lodge him and to feast him, that he may for ever delight to dwell with me. And make me also to dwell with him, sometimes retiring into his recesses and private rooms, by contemplation, and admiring of his beauties, and beholding the secrets of his kingdom; and, at all other times, walking in the courts of the Lord's house, by the diligences and labours of repentance and an holy life, till thou shalt please to call me to a nearer communication of thy excellencies: which then grant, when, by thy gracious assistances, I shall have done thy works, and glorified thy holy name, by the strict and never-failing purposes and proportionable endeavours of religion and holiness, through the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ. Amen.

DISCOURSE IV.

Of Mortification and Corporal Austerities.

1. "FROM the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force," said our blessed Saviour. For now that the new covenant was to be made with man, repentance, which is so great a part of it, being, in very many actions, a punitive duty, afflictive and vindicative, "from the days of the Baptist," (who first, by office and solemnity of design, published this doctrine,) violence was done to the inclinations and dispositions of man, and by such violences we were to be possessed of the kingdom. And his example was the best commentary upon his text: he did violence to himself; he lived a life, in which the rudenesses of camel's hair, and the lowest nutriment of flies and honey of the desert, his life of singularity, his retirement from the sweetnesses of society, his resisting the greatest of temptations, and despising to assume false honours, were instances of that violence, and explications of the doctrine of self-denial and mortification, which are the pedestal of the cross, and the supporters of christianity, as it distinguishes from all laws, religions, and institutions of the world.

2. Mortification is the one half of christianity; it is a dying to the world; it is a denying of the will and all its natural desires: "An abstinence from pleasure and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit, both may join in the service of God, and in the offices of holy religion."[a] It consists in actions of severity and renunciation; it refuses to give entertainment to any vanity, nor uses a freer license in things lawful, lest

[a] Τὴν ἐπὶ καθαιρέσει τοῦ φρονήματος σαρκὸς πρὸς τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας σκοπὸν ἐπιτηδευομένην ἀποχὴν τῶν ἡδέων.—S. BASIL.

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it be tempted to things unlawful; it kills the lusts of the flesh by taking away its fuel and incentives, and by using to contradict its appetite, does inure it, with more facility, to obey the superior faculties: and, in effect, it is nothing but a great care we sin not, and a prudent and severe using such remedies and instruments, which in nature and grace are made apt for the production of our purposes. And it consists in interior and exterior offices; these being but instruments of the interior, as the body is organical or instrumental to the soul, and no part of the duty itself, but as they are advantages to the end, the mortification of the spirit; which by whatsoever means we have once acquired and do continue, we are disobliged from all other exterior severities, unless by accident they come to be obligatory, and from some other cause.

3. Mortification of the will or the spirit of man, that is the duty; that the will of man may humbly obey God, and absolutely rule its inferior faculties; that the inordinations of our natural desires, begun by Adam's sin, and continued and increased by our continuing evil customs, may be again placed in the right order; that, since many of the Divine precepts are restraints upon our natural desires, we should so deny those appetites, that covet after natur l satisfactions, that they may not serve themselves by disserving God. For therefore our own wills are our greatest dangers and our greatest enemies; because they tend to courses contradictory to God. God commands us to be humble; our own desires are to be great, considerable, and high; and we are never secure enough from contempt, unless we can place our neighbours at our feet: here, therefore, we must deny our will, and appetites of greatness, for the purchase of humility. God commands temperance and chastity; our desires and natural promptness break the band asunder, and entertain dissolutions to the licentiousness of Apicius, or the wantonness of a Mahometan paradise, sacrificing meat and drink-offerings to our appetites, as if our stomachs were the temples of Bel, and making women and the opportunities of lust to be our dwelling, and our employment, even beyond the common loosenesses of entertainment: here, therefore, we must deny our own wills, our appetites of gluttony and drunkenness, and our prurient beastly inclinations, for the purchase of temperance and chastity. And every other virtue is, either directly or by accident, a certain instance of this great duty, which is, like a catholicon, purgative of all distemperatures, and is the best preparative and disposition to prayer in the world.

4. For it is a sad consideration, and of secret reason, that since prayer, of all duties, is certainly the sweetest and the easiest, it having in it no difficulty or vexatious labour, no weariness of bones, no dimness of eyes or hollow cheeks is directly consequent to it, no natural desires of contradictory quality, nothing of disease, but much of comfort, and more of hope in it; yet we are infinitely averse from it, weary of its length, glad of an occasion to pretermit our offices; and yet there is no visible cause of such indisposition, nothing in the nature of the thing, nor in the circumstances necessarily appendant to the duty. Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name, till the Spirit of God, by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know, that immortification of spirit is the cause of all our secret and spiritual indispositions: we are so incorporated to the desires of sensual objects, that we feel no relish or gust of the spiritual. It is as if a lion should eat hay, or an ox venison; there is no proportion between the object and the appetite, till, by mortification of our first desires, our wills are made spiritual, and our apprehensions supernatural and clarified. For as a cook told Dionysius the tyrant, the black broth of Lacedæmon would not do well at Syracuse, unless it be tasted by a Spartan's palate; so neither can the excellencies of heaven be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the sottish appetites of the world, and accustomed to diviner banquets. And this was mystically signified by the two altars in Solomon's temple; in the outer court whereof beasts were sacrificed, in the inner court an altar of incense: the first representing mortification or slaying of our beastly appetites; the second, the offering up our prayers, which are not likely to become a pleasant offertory, unless our impurities be removed by the atonement made by the first sacrifices: without our spirit be mortified, we neither can love to pray, nor can God love to hear us.

5. But there are three steps to ascend to this altar. The first is, to abstain from satisfying our carnal desires in the instances of sin; and although the furnace flames with vehement emissions at some times, yet to "walk in the midst of the burning without being consumed," like the children of the captivity: that is the duty even of the most imperfect, and is commonly the condition of those good persons, whose interest in secular employments speaks fair, and solicits often, and tempts highly; yet they manage their affairs with habitual justice, and a constant charity, and are temperate in their daily meals, chaste in the solaces of marriage, and pure in their spirits, unmingled with sordid affections in the midst of their possessions and enjoyments. These men are in the world, but they are strangers here: they have a city, but "not an abiding one;"[b] they are proselytes of the house, but have made no covenant with the world. For though they desire with secular desires, yet it is but for necessaries, and then they are content;[c] they use the creatures with freedom and modesty, but never to intemperance and transgression; so that their hands are below, tied there by the necessities of their life; but their hearts are above,[d] lifted up by the abstractions of this first degree of mortification. And this is the first and nicest distinction between a man of the world and a man of God; for this state is a denying our affections nothing but the sin; it enjoys as much of the world, as may be consistent with the possibilities of heaven. A little less than this is the state of immortification, and "a being in the flesh," which, saith the apostle, "cannot inherit

[b] Heb. xiii. 14.

[c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

[d] 2 Cor. v. 6.

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the kingdom of God." The flesh must first be separated, and the adherences pared off from the skin, before the parchment be fit to make a schedule for use, or to transmit a record. Whatsoever, in the sense of the Scripture, is flesh, or an enemy to the Spirit, if it be not rescinded and mortified, makes, that the laws of God cannot be written in our hearts. This is the doctrine St. Paul taught the church: "for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."[e] This first mortification is the way of life, if it continues; but its continuance is not secured, till we are advanced towards life by one degree more of this death. For this condition is a state of a daily and dangerous warfare; and many inroads are made by sin, and many times hurt is done, and booty carried off: for he that is but thus far mortified, although his dwelling be within the kingdom of grace, yet it is in the borders of it, and hath a dangerous neighbourhood. If we mean to be safe, we must remove into the heart of the land, or carry the war farther off.

6. Secondly: We must not only be strangers here, but we must be dead too, "dead unto the world:" that is, we must not only deny our vices, but our passions; not only contradict the direct immediate persuasion to a sin, but also cross the inclination to it.[f] So long as our appetites are high and full, we shall never have peace or safety, but the dangers and insecurities of a full war and a potent enemy; we are always disputing the question, ever struggling for life: but when our passions are killed, when our desires are little and low, then grace reigns, then "our life is hid with Christ in God;" then we have fewer interruptions in the way of righteousness; then we are not so apt to be surprised by sudden eruptions and transportation of passions, and our piety itself is more prudent and reasonable, chosen with a freer election, discerned with clearer understanding, hath more in it of judgment than of fancy, and is more spiritual and angelical. He that is apt to be angry, though he be habitually careful, and full of observation that he sin not, may, at some time or other, be surprised, when his guards are undiligent, and without actual expectation of an enemy: but if his anger be dead in him, and the inclination lessened to the indifference and gentleness of a child, the man dwells safe, because of the impotency of his enemy, or that he is reduced to obedience, or hath taken conditions of peace. He that hath refused to consent to actions of uncleanness, to which he was strongly tempted, hath won a victory by fine force; God hath blessed him well. But an opportunity may betray him instantly, and the sin may be in upon him unawares; unless also his desires be killed, he is betrayed by a party within. David was a holy person, but he was surprised by the sight of Bathsheba; for his freer use of permitted beds had kept the fire alive, which was apt to be put into a flame, when so fair a beauty reflected through his eyes. But Joseph was a virgin, and kept under all his inclinations to looser thoughts; opportunity, and command, and violence, and beauty, did make no breach upon his spirit.

7. He that is in the first state of pilgrimage, does not mutiny against his superiors, nor publish their faults, nor envy their dignities; but he that is dead to the world, sees no fault that they have; and when he hears an objection, he buries it in excuse, and rejoices in the dignity of their persons. Every degree of mortification endures reproof without murmur; but he that is quite dead to the world, and to his own will, feels no regret against it, and hath no secret thoughts of trouble and unwillingness to the suffering, save only that he is sorry he deserved it. "For so a dead body resists not your violence, changes not its posture you placed it in, strikes not its striker, is not moved by your words, nor provoked by your scorn, nor is troubled when you shrink with horror at the sight of it; only it will hold the head downward in all its situations, unless it be hindered by violence:" and a mortified spirit is such, without indignation against scorn, without revenge against injuries, without murmuring at low offices, not impatient in troubles, indifferent in all accidents, neither transported with joy, nor depressed with sorrow, and is humble in all his thoughts. And thus, "he that is dead," saith the apostle, "is justified from sins."[g] And this is properly a state of life, in which, by the grace of Jesus, we are restored to a condition of order and interior beauty in our faculties; our actions are made moderate and humane, our spirits are even, and our understandings undisturbed.

8. For passions of the sensitive soul are like an exhalation, hot and dry, borne up from the earth upon the wings of a cloud, and detained by violence out of its place, causing thunders, and making eruptions into lightning and sudden fires. There is a tempest in the soul of a passionate man; and though every wind does not shake the earth, nor rend trees up by the roots, yet we call it violent and ill weather, if it only makes a noise and is harmless. And it is an inordination in the spirit of a man, when his passions are tumultuous and mighty; though they do not determine directly upon a sin, they discompose his peace, and disturb his spirit, and make it like troubled waters, in which no man can see his own figure and just proportions; and therefore, by being less a man, he cannot be so much a christian, in the midst of so great indispositions. For although the cause may hallow the passion, (and if a man be very angry for God's cause, it is zeal, not fury,) yet the cause cannot secure the person from violence, transportation, and inconvenience. When Elisha was consulted by three kings concerning the success of their present expedition,[h] he grew so angry against idolatrous Joram, and was carried on to so great degrees of disturbance, that when, for Jehoshaphat's sake, he was content to inquire of the Lord, he called for a minstrel, who, by his harmony, might recompose his disunited and troubled

[e] Rom. viii. 13.
[f] O quàm contempta res est homo, nisi super humana se erexerit!—SEN.
[g] Rom. vi. 7.
[h] 2 Kings iii. 13, 14, 15.

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spirit, that so he might be apter for divination. And sometimes this zeal goes besides the intentions of the man, and beyond the degrees of prudent or lawful; and engages in a sin, though at first it was zeal for religion. For so it happened in Moses, "at the waters of Massah and Meribah, he spake foolishly;" and yet it was when he was zealous for God, and extremely careful of the people's interest. For his passion, he was hindered from entering into the land of promise. And we also, if we be not moderate and well-tempered, even in our passions for God, may, like Moses, break the tables of the law, and throw them out of our hands, with zeal to have them preserved; for passion violently snatches at the conclusion, but is inconsiderate and incurious concerning the premises. The sum and purpose of this discourse, is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "He that will be my disciple must deny himself;" [i] that is, not only desires that are sinful, but desires that are his own, pursuances of his own affections, and violent motions, though to things not evil, or in themselves contagious.

9. Thirdly: And yet there is a degree of mortification of spirit beyond this: for the condition of our security may require, that we not only deny to act our temptations, or to please our natural desires, but also to seek opportunities of doing displeasure to our affections, and violence to our inclinations; and not only to be indifferent, but to choose a contradiction and a denial to our strongest appetites, to rejoice in a trouble: and this was the spirit of St. Paul,—"I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations;" [k] and, "We glory in it." [l] Which joy consists not in any sensitive pleasure any man can take in afflictions and adverse accidents, but in a despising the present inconveniences, and looking through the cloud unto those great felicities, and graces, and consignations to glory, which are the effects of the cross: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed;" [m] that was the incentive of St. Paul's joy. And therefore, as it may consist with any degree of mortification to pray for the taking away of the cross, upon condition it may consist with God's glory and our ghostly profit; so it is properly an act of this virtue, to pray for the cross, or to meet it, if we understand it may be for the interest of the spirit. And thus St. Basil prayed to God to remove his violent pains of headach; but when God heard him, and took away his pain, and lust came in the place of it, he prayed to God to restore him his headach again: that cross was gain and joy, when the removal of it was so full of danger and temptation. And this the masters of spiritual life call "being crucified with Christ;" because, as Christ chose the death, and desired it by the appetites of the spirit, though his flesh smarted under it, and groaned and died with the burden; so do all that are thus mortified: they place misfortunes and sadness amongst things eligible, and set them before the eyes of their desire, although the flesh and the desires of sense are factious and bold against such sufferings.

10. Of these three degrees of interior or spiritual mortification, the first is duty, the second is counsel, and the third is perfection. We sin if we have not the first; we are in danger without the second; but without the third we cannot "be perfect, as our heavenly Father is," but shall have more of human infirmities to be ashamed of, than can be excused by the accrescences and condition of our nature. The first is only of absolute necessity; the second is prudent, and of greatest convenience; but the third is excellent and perfect.[n] And it was the consideration of a wise man, that the saints in heaven, who understand the excellent glories and vast differences of state and capacities amongst beatified persons, although they have no envy nor sorrows, yet if they were upon earth, with the same notion and apprehensions they have in heaven, would not for all the world lose any degree of glory, but mortify to the greatest eminence, that their glory may be a derivation of the greatest ray of light; every degree being of compensation glorious,[o] and disproportionably beyond the inconsiderable troubles of the greatest self-denial. God's purpose is, that we abstain from sin; there is no more in the commandment; and therefore we must deny ourselves, so as not to admit a sin, under pain of a certain and eternal curse: but the other degrees of mortification are by accident, so many degrees of virtue; not being enjoined or counselled for themselves, but for the preventing of crimes, and for securities of good life; and, therefore, are parts and offices of christian prudence, which whosoever shall positively reject, is neither much in love with virtue, nor careful of his own safety.

11. Secondly: But mortification hath also some designs upon the body. For the body is the shop and forge of the soul, in which all her designs, which are transient upon external objects, are framed: and it is a good servant, as long as it is kept in obedience and under discipline; but "he that breeds his servant delicately," [p] will find him contumacious and troublesome, bold and confident as his son: and, therefore, St. Paul's practice (as himself gives account of it) was "to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection, lest he should become a cast-away;" [q] for the desires of the body are, in the same things in which themselves are satisfied, so many injuries to the soul; because upon every one of the appetites a restraint is made, and a law placed for sentinel, that if we transgress the bounds fixed by the Divine commandment, it becomes a sin: now it is hard for us to keep them within compass, because they are little more than

[i] Matt. xvi. 24.
[k] 2 Cor. vii. 4.
[l] Rom. v. 3.
[m] Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

[n] Κάθαρσις μὲν, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀλογίας, καὶ τοῦ θνητοειδοῦς σώματος· τελειότης δὲ, τῆς οἰκείας εὐζωίας ἀνάληψις, πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὁμοίωσιν ἐπανάγουσα· ταῦτα δὲ πέφυκεν ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀλήθεια μάλιστα ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ἡ μὲν, τὴν ἀμετρίαν τῶν παθῶν ἐξορίζουσα, ἡ δὲ, τὸ θεῖον εἶδος, εὐφυῶς ἔχουσα, προσκτωμένη· — HIEROCLES in Pythagor.

[o] Tantam gloriam omni horâ negligimus, quanta bona interim facere possemus, si otiosè eam transigimus.—S. BONAVENT.

[p] Prov. xxix. 21.

[q] 1 Cor. ix. 27. Rom. vi. 4. Heb. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 1. and iv. 1.

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agents merely natural, and therefore cannot interrupt their act, but covet and desire as much as they can, without suspension or coercion, but what comes from without; which is, therefore, the more troublesome, because all such restraints are against nature, and without sensual pleasure. And, therefore, this is that that St. Paul said, "When we were in the flesh, the passions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."[r] For these pleasures of the body draw us as loadstones draw iron, not for love, but for prey and nutriment: it feeds upon the iron, as the bodily pleasures upon the life of the spirit, which is lessened and impaired, according as the gusts of the flesh grow high and sapid.

12. He that feeds a lion must obey him, unless he make his den to be his prison. Our lusts are as wild and as cruel beasts; and, unless they feel the load of fetters and of laws, will grow unruly and troublesome,[s] and increase upon us as we give them food and satisfaction. He that is used to drink high wines, is sick if he hath not his proportion, to what degree soever his custom hath brought his appetite: and to some men temperance becomes certain death, because the inordination of their desires hath introduced a custom, and custom hath increased those appetites, and made them almost natural in their degree: but he that hath been used to hard diet and the pure stream, his refreshments are much within the limits of temperance, and his desires as moderate as his diet. St. Jerom affirms, that to be continent in the state of widowhood, is harder than to keep our virgin pure: and there is reason, that then the appetite should be harder to be restrained, when it hath not been accustomed to be denied, but satisfied in its freer solicitations. When a fontinel is once opened, all the symbolical humours run thither, and issue out; and it is not to be stopped without danger, unless the humour be purged or diverted. So is the satisfaction of an impure desire; it opens the issue, and makes way for the emanation of all impurity; and, unless the desire be mortified, will not be stopped by purposes and easy desires.

13. Since, therefore, the body is the instrument of sins, the fuel and the incentive, our mortification must reach thither also, at least in some degrees, or it will be to small purpose to think of mortifying our spirit in some instances of temptation. In vain does that man think to keep his honour and chastity, that invites his lust to an activeness, by soft beds and high diet, and idleness and opportunity. Make the soul's instrument unapt, and half the work is done. And this is true in all instances of carnality or natural desires, whose scene lies in the lower region of passions, and are acted by the body; but the operation of the cure must be in proportion to the design; as the mortification of the spirit is in several degrees, so the mortification of the body also hath its several parts of prudence, injunction, and necessity. For the prescribing all sorts of mortifications corporal, indefinitely and indiscriminately to all persons, without separation of their ends and distinct capacities, is a snare to men's consciences, makes religion impertinently troublesome, occasions some men to glory in corporal austerity, as if of itself it were an act of piety, and a distinction of the man from the more imperfect persons of the world, and is all the way unreasonable and inartificial.

14. First: Therefore, such whose engagements in the world, or capacities of person, confine them to the lowest and first step of mortification; those who fight only for life and liberty, not for privileges and honour; that are in perpetual contestation and close fightings with sin; it is necessary that their body also be mortified in such a degree, that their desires transport them not beyond the permissions of Divine and human laws.[t] Let such men be strict in the rules of temperance and sobriety, be chaste within the laws of marriage, cherish their body to preserve their health, and their health to serve God, and to do their offices. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are the strict laws of temperance; denying all transgressions of the appetite, boiling over its margin and proper limits; assiduous prayer, and observation of the public laws of fasting; which are framed so moderate and even, as to be proportionable to the common manner of living of persons secular and encumbered. For though many persons of common employments, and even manner of living, have, in the midst of worldly avocations, undertaken austerities very rude and rigorous, yet it was in order to a higher mortification of spirit; and it is also necessary they should, if either naturally, or habitually, or easily, they suffer violent transportation of passions: for since the occasions of anger and disturbance in the world frequently occur, if such passions be not restrained by greater violence than is competent to the ordinary offices of a moderate piety, the cure is weaker than the humour, and so leaves the work imperfect.

15. Secondly: But this is coincident to the second degree of mortification; for if, either out of desire of a farther step towards perfection, or out of the necessities of nature or evil customs, it be necessary also to subdue our passions, as well as the direct invitations to sins; in both these cases the body must suffer more austerities, even such as directly are contrariant to every passionate disturbance, though it be not ever sinful in the instance. All mortifiers must abstain from every thing that is unlawful; but these, that they may abstain from things unlawful, must also deny to themselves satisfaction in things lawful and pleasant: and this is in a just proportion to the end, the subduing the passions, lest their liberty and boldness become licentious. And we shall easier deny their importunity to sin, when we will not please them in those things in

[r] Rom. vii. 5.

[s] Αἰσχρὸν τῶν μὲν οἰκετῶν ἄρχειν, ταῖς δὲ ἡδοναῖς δουλεύειν. —ISOCR. ad Demonic.

[t] Huic epulæ, vicisse famem; magnique penates,
Summovisse hyemem tecto; pretiosaque vestis,
Hirtam membra super, Romani more Quiritis,
Induxisse togam. De CATONE dixit Lucanus, ii. 384.

Intonsos rigidam in frontem descendere canos
Passus erat, mœstamque genis increscere barbam.
De eodem, ii. 376.

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which we may: such in which the fear of God, and the danger of our souls, and the convictions of reason and religion, do not immediately co-operate. And this was the practice of David, when he had thirsted for the water of Bethlehem, and some of his worthies ventured their lives, and brought it; "he refused to drink it, but poured it upon the ground unto the Lord:"[u] that is, it became a drink-offering unto the Lord; an acceptable oblation, in which he sacrificed his desires to God, denying himself the satisfaction of such a desire, which was natural and innocent, save that it was something nice, delicate, and curious. Like this was the act of the fathers, in the mountain Nitria,[x] to one of which a fair cluster of dried grapes being sent, he refused to taste them, lest he should be too sensual and much pleased, but sent them to another, and he to a third; and the same consideration transmitted the present through all their cells, till it came to the first man again; all of them not daring to content their appetite in a thing too much desired, lest the like importunity, in the instance of a sin, should prevail upon them. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are subtractions, rather than imposition, of austerities; let them be great haters of corporal pleasures, eating for necessity, diet spare and cheap; abridging and making short the opportunities of natural and permitted solaces;[y] refusing exterior comforts; not choosing the most pleasant object; not suffering delight to be the end of eating, and therefore separating delight from it as much as prudently they may; not being too importunate with God to remove his gentler hand of paternal correction, but inuring ourselves to patient suffering, and indifferent acceptation of the cross that God lays upon us, at no hand living delicately, or curiously, or impatiently. And this was the condition of St. Paul, suffering with excellent temper all those persecutions and inconveniences, which the enemies of religion loaded him withal; which he called "bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body,"[z] and "carrying about in his body the dying"[a] or mortification "of the Lord Jesus:" it was in the matter of persecution, which because he bare patiently, and was accustomed to, and he accepted with indifference and renunciation, they were the mortifications and the marks of Jesus; that is, a true conformity to the passion of Christ, and of great effect and interest for the preventing sins by the mortification of his natural desires.

16. Thirdly: But in the pale of the church, there are, and have been, many tall cedars, whose tops have reached to heaven; some there are that choose afflictions of the body, that, by turning the bent and inclination of their affections into sensual displeasures, they may not only cut off all pretensions of temptation, but grow in spiritual graces, and perfections intellectual and beatified. To this purpose they served themselves with the instances of sack-cloth, hard lodging, long fasts, pernoctation in prayers, renunciation of all secular possessions, great and expensive charity, bodily labours to great weariness and affliction, and many other prodigies of voluntary suffering, which Scripture and the ecclesiastical stories do frequently mention. St. Lewis, king of France, wore sackcloth every day, unless sickness hindered; and St. Zenobius, as long as he was a bishop. And when Severus Sulpitius sent a sackcloth to St. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, he returned to him a letter of thanks, and discoursed piously concerning the use of corporal austerities. And that I need not instance, it was so general, that this was, by way of appropriation, called "the garment of the church,"[b] because of the frequent use of such instruments of exterior mortification: and so it was in other instances. St. James neither ate flesh nor drank wine; St. Matthew lived upon acorns, seeds, and herbs; and, amongst the elder christians, some rolled themselves naked in snows, some upon thorns, some on burning coals, some chewed bitter pills and masticated gums, and sipped frequently of horrid potions, and wore iron upon their skin, and bolts upon their legs, and, in witty torments, excelled the cruelty of many of their persecutors, whose rage determined quickly in death, and had certainly less of torment than the tedious afflictions and rude penances of Simeon, surnamed Stylites. But as all great examples have excellencies above the ordinary devotions of good people, so have they some danger and much consideration.

17. First, therefore, I consider, that these bodily and voluntary self-afflictions can only be of use in carnal and natural temptations, of no use in spiritual: for ascetic diet, hard lodging, and severe disciplines, cannot be directly operative upon the spirit, but only by mediation of the body, by abating its extravagancies, by subtracting its maintenance, by lessening its temptations; these may help to preserve the soul chaste or temperate, because the scene of these sins lies in the body, and thence they have their maintenance,[c] and from thence also may receive their abatements. But in actions which are less material, such as pride, and envy, and blasphemy, and impenitence, and all the kinds and degrees of malice, external mortifications do so little co-operate to their cure, that oftentimes they are their greatest inflamers and incentives, and are like cordials given to cure a cold fit of an ague, they do their work, but bring a hot fit in its place: and besides that great mortifiers have been soonest assaulted by the spirit of pride, we find that great fasters are naturally angry and choleric. St. Hierom found it in himself, and Ruffinus felt some of the effects of it. And, therefore, this last part of corporal mortification, and the choosing such afflictions by a voluntary imposition, is at no hand to be ap-

[u] 2 Sam. xxiii. 16.
[x] Apud Pallad. in Histor. Lausiac.
[y] Quantò quisque sibi plura negaverit, à Diis plura feret. HOR. iii. 16, 21.
[z] Gal. vi. 17. [a] 2 Cor. iv. 10.

[b] Deposuerunt seculi byssum, et sumpserunt ecclesiæ vestimentum, quod est cilicium.—RURICIUS, ep. 20. EUSEB. lib. ii. Hist. c. 22. CLEM. ALEX. Pædag. lib. ii. c. 1.
[c] Ἐν πλησμονῇ γὰρ κύπρις· ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακῶς
Πράσσουσιν οὐκ ἔνιστιν ἀφροδίτη βροτοῖς.—ANTIPHAN.

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plied in all cases, but in cases of lust only, and intemperance, or natural impatience, or such crimes which dwell in the senses: and then it also would be considered, whether or no rudeness to the body, applied for the obtaining patience, be not a direct temptation to impatience, a provoking the spirit, and a running into that, whither we pray that God would not suffer us to be led. Possibly such austerities, if applied with great caution and wise circumstances, may be an exercise of patience, when the grace is by other means acquired; and he that finds them so, may use them, if he dares trust himself: but as they are dangerous before the grace is obtained, so when it is, they are not necessary. And still it may be inquired, in the case of temptations to lust, whether any such austerities, which can consist with health, will do the work? So long as the body is in health, it will do its offices of nature; if it is not in health, it cannot do all offices of grace, nor many of our calling. And therefore, although they may do some advantages to persons tempted with the lowest sins, yet they will not do it all, nor do it alone, nor are they safe to all dispositions: and where they are useful to these smaller and lower purposes, yet we must be careful to observe that the mortification of the spirit to the greatest and most perfect purposes, is to be set upon by means spiritual, and of immediate efficacy; for they are the lowest operations of the soul, which are moved and produced by actions corporal; the soul may from those become lustful or chaste, cheerful or sad, timorous or confident: but yet even in these the soul receives but some dispositions thence, and more forward inclinations: but nothing from the body can be operative in the begetting or increase of charity, or the love of God, or devotion, or in mortifying spiritual and intellectual vices: and therefore those greater perfections and heights of the soul, such as are designed in this highest degree of mortification, are not apt to be enkindled by corporal austerities. And Nigrinus, in Lucian,[d] finds fault with those philosophers who thought virtue was to be purchased by cutting the skin with whips, binding the nerves, razing the body with iron; but he taught that virtue is to be placed in the mind by actions internal and immaterial, and that from thence remedies are to be derived against perturbations and actions criminal. And this is determined by the apostle in fairest intimation, "Mortify, therefore, your earthly members;"[e] and he instances in carnal crimes, "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness," which are things may be something abated by corporal mortifications; and that these are, by distinct manner, to be helped from other more spiritual vices, he adds, "But now, therefore, put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying."[f] To both these sorts of sins, mortification being the general remedy, particular applications are to be made, and it must be only spiritual, or also corporal, in proportion to the nature of the sins:[g] he seems to distinguish the remedy by separation of the nature of the crimes, and possibly also by the differing words of "mortify"[h] applied to the carnal sins, and "put off"[i] to crimes spiritual.

18. Secondly: But in the lesser degrees of mortification, in order to subduing of all passions of the sensitive appetite, and the consequent and symbolical sins,[k] bodily austerities are of good use, if well understood and prudently undertaken. To which purpose I also consider, no acts of corporal austerity or external religion are of themselves to be esteemed holy or acceptable to God, are no where precisely commanded, no instruments of union with Christ, no immediate parts of Divine worship; and therefore, to suffer corporal austerities with thoughts determining upon the external action or imaginations of sanctity inherent in the action, is against the purity, the spirituality, and simplicity of the gospel. And this is the meaning of St. Paul, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them which have walked in them;"[l] and, "The kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;"[m] and, "Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things."[n] Now, if external mortifications are not for themselves, then they are to receive their estimate as they co-operate to the end: whatsoever is a prudent restraint of an extravagant passion, whatsoever is a direct denial of a sin, whatsoever makes provision for the spirit, or withdraws the fuel from the impure fires of carnality, that is an act of mortification; but those austerities which Baal's priests did use, or the Flagellantes, an ignorant faction that went up and down villages whipping themselves, or those which return periodically on a set day of discipline, and using rudenesses to the body by way of ceremony and solemnity, not directed against the actual incursion of a pungent lust, are not within the verge of the grace of mortification. For, unless the temptation to a carnal sin be actually incumbent and pressing upon the soul, pains of infliction and smart do no benefit toward suppressing the habit or inclination: for such sharp disciplines are but short and transient troubles; and although they take away the present fancies of a temptation, yet, unless it be rash and uncharitable, there is no effect remanent upon the body, but that the temptation may speedily return. As is the danger, so must be the application of the remedy. Actual severities are not imprudently undertaken in case of imminent danger; but to cure an habitual lust, such corporal mortifi-

[d] Δῆλος δὲ ἦν καὶ τῶν τοιούτων κατεγνωκὼς φιλοσόφων, οἳ ταύτην ἄσκησιν ἀρετῆς ὑπελάμβανον, ἣν πολλαῖς ἀνάγκαις καὶ πόνοις τοὺς νέους ἀντέχειν καταγυμνάσωσι. τοῦτο μὲν δεῖν οἱ πολλοὶ κελεύοντες, ἄλλοι δὲ, μαστιγοῦντες· οἱ δὲ χαριέστεροι, καὶ σιδήρῳ τὰς ἐπιφανείας αὐτῶν καταξύοντες. ἡγεῖτο γὰρ χρῆναι πολὺ πρότερον ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸ στερρὸν τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαθὲς κατασκευάσαι.—LUCIAN. Nigrin. Bipont. vol. i. p. 50.

[e] Col. iii. 5. [f] Verse 8.

[g] Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes,
Arida nec sitiens ora lavabis aquâ.
Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis?

[h] Νεκρώσατε τὰ μέλη. [i] Ἀπόθεσθε τὰ πάντα.

[k] Ὁ ἐγγὺς κυρίου πλήρης μαστίγων.—CLEM. ALEXAND. Pædag. 2.

[l] Heb. xiii. 9. [m] Rom. xiv. 17. [n] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

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cations are most reasonable, whose effect is permanent, and which takes away whatsoever does minister more fuel, and puts a torch to the pile.

19. But this is altogether a discourse of christian prudence, not of precise duty and religion; for if we do, by any means, provide for our indemnity, and secure our innocence, all other exterior mortifications are not necessary, and they are convenient but as they do facilitate or co-operate towards the end. And if that be well understood, it will concern us that they be used with prudence and caution, with purity of intention, and without pride: for, since they are nothing in themselves, but are hallowed and adopted into the family of religious actions by participation of the end, the doing them not for themselves takes off all complacency and fancy reflecting from an opinion of the external actions, guides and purifies the intention, and teaches us to be prudent in the managing of those austerities, which, as they are in themselves afflictive, so have in them nothing that is eligible, if they be imprudent.

20. And now, supposing these premises as our guide to choose and enter into the action, prudence must be called into the execution and discharge of it, and the manner of its managing. And, for the prudential part, I shall first give the advice of Nigrinus in the discipline of the old philosophers: "He that will best institute and instruct men in the studies of virtue and true philosophy, must have regard to the mind, to the body, to the age, to the former education, and capacities or incapacities of the person;"[o] to which all such circumstances may be added, as are to be accounted for in all prudent estimations; such as are national customs, dangers of scandal, the presence of other remedies, or disbanding of the inclination.

21. Secondly: It may also concern the prudence of this duty, not to neglect the smallest inadvertencies and minutes of lust or spiritual inconvenience, but to contradict them in their weakness and first beginnings. We see that great disturbances are wrought from the smallest occasions, meeting with an impatient spirit, like great flames kindled from a little spark fallen into a heap of prepared nitre. St. Austin tells a story of a certain person "much vexed with flies in the region of his dwelling, and himself heightened the trouble by too violent and busy reflections upon the inconsiderableness of the instrument, and the greatness of the vexation alighting upon a peevish spirit. In this disposition he was visited by a Manichee (an heretic that denied God to be the maker of things visible): he being busy to rub his infection upon the next thing he met, asked the impatient person, whom he thought to be the maker of flies? He answered, I think the devil was; for they are instruments of great vexation and perpetual trouble. What he rather fancied than believed, or expressed by anger rather than at all had entertained within, the Manichee confirmed by such arguments, to which his adversary was very apt to give consent by reason of his impatience and peevishness. The Manichee, having set his foot firm upon his first breach, proceeded in his question, If the devil made flies, why not bees, who are but a little bigger, and have a sting too? The consideration of the sting made him fit to think, that the little difference in bigness needed not a distinct and a greater efficient, especially since the same workman can make a great as well as a little vessel. The Manichee proceeded, If a bee, why not a locust? if a locust, then a lizard? if a lizard, then a bird? if a bird, then a lamb? and thence he made bold to proceed to a cow, to an elephant, to a man. His adversary, by this time, being insnared by granting so much, and now ashamed not to grant more, lest his first concessions should seem unreasonable and impious, confessed the devil to be the maker of all creatures visible."[p] The use which is made of the story, is this caution, that the devil do not abuse us in flies, and provoke our spirits by trifles and impertinent accidents: for if we be unmortified in our smallest motions, it is not imaginable we should stand the blast of an impetuous accident and violent perturbation. Let us not, therefore, give our passions course in a small accident, because the instance is inconsiderable; for, though it be, the consequence may be dangerous, and a wave may follow a wave, till the inundation be general and desperate. And therefore, here it is intended for advice, that we be observant of the accidents of our domestic affairs, and curious that every trifling inadvertency of a servant, or slight misbecoming action, or imprudent words, be not apprehended as instruments of vexation; for so many small occasions, if they be productive of many small disturbances, will produce an habitual churlishness and immortification of spirit.

22. Thirdly: Let our greatest diligence and care be employed in mortifying our predominant passion: for if our care be so great as not to entertain the smallest, and our resolution so strong and holy as not to be subdued by the greatest and most passionate desires, the Spirit hath done all its work, secures the future, and sanctifies the present; and nothing is wanting but perseverance in the same prudence and religion. And this is typically commanded in the precept of God to Moses and Aaron, in the matter of Peor: "Vex the Midianites, because they vexed you, and made you sin by their daughters." And Phinehas did so; he killed a prince of the house of Simeon, and a princess of Midian, and God confirmed the priesthood to him for ever; meaning, that we shall for ever be admitted to a nearer relation to God, if we sacrifice to God our dearest lust. And this is not so properly an act, as the end of mortification. Therefore it concerns the prudence of the duty, that all the efficacy and violence of it be employed against the strongest, and there where is the most dangerous hostility.

23. Fourthly: But if we mean to be masters of the field, and put our victory past dispute, let us

[o] Καὶ τὸν ἄριστα παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους προαιρούμενον, τοῦτο μὲν ψυχῆς, τοῦτο δὲ σώματος, τοῦτο δὲ ἡλικίας τε καὶ τῆς πρότερον ἀγωγῆς ἐστοχᾶσθαι.—LUCIAN. NIGRIN.

[p] Tract 1. in Joh.

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mortify our morosity and natural aversations, reducing them to an indifferency, having in our wills no fondnesses, in our spirits no faction of persons or nations, being prepared to love all men, and to endure all things, and to undertake all employments, which are duty or counsel in all circumstances or disadvantages. For the excellency of evangelical sanctity does surmount all antipathies, as a vessel climbs up and rides upon a wave; "The wolf and the lamb shall cohabit, and a child shall play and put his fingers in the cavern of an aspick;" nations, whose interests are most contradictory, must be knit by the confederations of a mortified and a christian spirit, and single persons must triumph over the difficulties of an indisposed nature, or else their own will is unmortified, and nature is stronger, than can well consist with the dominion and absolute empire of grace. To this I reduce such peevish and unhandsome nicenesses in matters of religion, that are unsatisfied, unless they have all exterior circumstances trimmed up and made pompous for their religious offices; such who cannot pray without a convenient room, and their devotion is made active only by a well-built chapel, and they cannot sing lauds without church music, and too much light dissolves their intention, and too much dark promotes their melancholy; and because these, and the like exterior ministries, are good advantages, therefore without them they can do nothing, which certainly is a great intimation and likeness to immortification. Our will should be like the candle of the eye, without all colour in itself, that it may entertain the species of all colours from without: and when we lust after mandrakes, and deliciousness of exterior ministries, we many times are brought to betray our own interest, and prostitute our dearest affections to more ignoble and stranger desires. Let us love all natures, and serve all persons, and pray in all places, and fast without opportunities, and do alms above our power, and set ourselves heartily on work, to neglect and frustrate those lower temptations of the devil, who will frequently enough make our religion inopportune, if we then will make it infrequent; and will present us with objects enough and flies to disquiet our persons, if our natures be petulant, peevish, curious, and unmortified.

24. It is a great mercy of God to have an affable, sweet, and well-disposed nature, and it does half the work of mortification for us; we have the less trouble to subdue our passions and destroy our lusts. But then, as those, whose natures are morose, choleric, peevish, and lustful, have greater difficulty; so is their virtue of greater excellence, and returned with a more ample reward: but it is in all men's natures, as with them who gathered manna, "They that gathered little had no lack, and they that gathered much had nothing over:" they who are of ill natures, shall want no assistance of God's grace to work their cure,[q] though their flesh be longer healing; and they who are sweetly tempered, being naturally meek and modest, chaste or temperate, will find work enough to contest against their temptations from without, though from within possibly they may have fewer. Yet there are greater degrees of virtue and heroical excellencies, and great rewards, to which God hath designed them by so fair dispositions, and it will concern all their industry to mortify their spirit, which, though it be malleable and more ductile, yet it is as bare and naked of imagery as the rudest and most iron nature: so that mortification will be every man's duty; no nature, nor piety, nor wisdom, nor perfection, but will need it, either to subdue a lust, or a passion; to cut off an occasion, or to resist a temptation; to persevere, or to go on; to secure our present estate, or to proceed towards perfection. But all men do not think so.

25. For there are some, who have great peace, no fightings within, no troubles without, no disputes or contradictions in their spirit: but these men have the peace of tributaries, or a conquered people; the gates of their city stand open day and night, that all the carriages may enter without disputing the pass: the flesh and the spirit dispute not, because the spirit is there in pupillage or in bonds, and the flesh rides in triumph, with the tyranny, and pride, and impotency, of a female tyrant. For, in the sense of religion, we all are warriors or slaves; either ourselves are stark dead in trespasses and sins, or we need to stand perpetually upon our guards in continual observation, and in contestation against our lusts and our passions; so long denying and contradicting our own wills, till we will and choose to do things against our wills, having an eye always to those infinite satisfactions, which shall glorify our wills and all our faculties, when we arrive to that state, in which there shall be no more contradiction, but only that "our mortal shall put on immortality."

26. But as some have a vain and dangerous peace, so others double their trouble by too nice and impertinent scruples, thinking that every temptation is a degree of immortification. As long as we live, we shall have to do with enemies: but as this life is ever a state of imperfection, so the very design and purpose of mortification is not to take away temptations, but to overcome them; it endeavours to facilitate the work, and secure our condition, by removing all occasions it can: but the opportunity of a crime, and the solicitation to a sin, is no fault of ours, unless it be of our procuring, or finds entertainment when it comes unsent for. To suffer a temptation is a misery; but if we then set upon the mortification of it, it is an occasion of virtue, and never is criminal, unless we give consent. But then also it would be considered, that it is not good offering ourselves to fire ordeal, to confirm our innocence; nor prudent to enter into battle without need, and to show our valour; nor safe to procure a temptation, that we may have the reward of mortification of it. For mortification of the spirit is not commanded as a duty finally resting in itself, or immediately landing upon God's glory, such as are acts of charity and devotion, chastity and justice; but it is the

[q] Nemo adeò ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modò culturæ patientem commodet aurem.
HOR. ep. 1. i. 39.

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great instrument of humility and all other graces; and, therefore, is to be undertaken to destroy a sin, and to secure a virtuous habit. And besides that,[r] to call on a danger is to tempt God, and to invite the devil (and no man is sure of a victory): it is also great imprudence to create a need, that we may take it away again; to drink poison, to make experiment of the antidote; and, at the best, it is but running back, to come just to the same place again: for he that is not tempted, does not sin; but he that invites a temptation, that he might overcome it, or provokes a passion, that he may allay it, is then but in the same condition after his pains and his danger: he was not sure he should come so far.

THE PRAYER.

O dearest God, who hast framed man of soul and body, and fitted him with faculties and proportionable instruments to serve thee according to all our capacities, let thy Holy Spirit rule and sanctify every power and member, both of soul and body, that they may keep that beauteous order, which, in our creation, thou didst intend, and to which thou dost restore thy people in the renovations of grace; that our affections may be guided by reason, our understanding may be enlightened with thy word, and then may guide and persuade our will; that we suffer no violent transportation of passions, nor be overcome by a temptation, nor consent to the impure solicitations of lust; that "sin may not reign in our mortal bodies," but that both bodies and souls may be conformable to the sufferings of the holy Jesus; that in our body we may bear the marks and dying of our Lord, and in our spirits we may be humble and mortified, and like him, in all his imitable perfections; that we may die to sin, and live to righteousness, and, after our suffering together with him in this world, we may reign together with him hereafter; to whom, in the Unity of the most mysterious Trinity, be all glory, and dominion, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION IX.

Of Jesus being baptized, and going into the Wilderness to be tempted.

1. Now the full time was come, Jesus took leave of his mother and his trade, to begin his Father's work, and the office prophetical, in order to the redemption of the world; and when "John was baptizing in Jordan, Jesus came to John, to be baptized of him." The Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been, from their infancy, driven to several places, designed to several employments, and never met till now. But immediately the Holy Ghost inspired St. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at his first arrival he knew him, and did him worship. And when Jesus desired to be baptized, "John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" For the baptism of John, although it was not a direct instrument of the Spirit for the collation of grace, neither find we it administered in any form of words, not so much as in the name of Christ to come, as many dream:[a] (because, even after John had baptized, the Pharisees still doubted if he were the Messias; which they would not, if, in his form of ministration, he had published Christ to come after him; and also because it had not been proper for Christ himself to have received that baptism, whose form had specified himself to come hereafter; neither would it consist with the revelation which John had, and the confession which he made, to baptize in the name of Christ to come, whom the Spirit marked out to him to be come already, and himself pointed at him with his finger:) yet it was a ceremonious consignation of the doctrine of repentance,[b] which was one great part of the covenant evangelical, and was a divine institution, the susception of it was in order to the fulfilling all righteousness; it was a sign of humility, the persons baptized confessed their sins; it was a sacramental disposing to the baptism and faith of Christ: but therefore John wondered, why the Messias, the Lamb of God, pure and without spot, who needed not the abstersions of repentance, or the washings of baptism, should demand it, and of him, a sinner, and his servant. And in the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes used at Berœa, (as St. Hierom reports,[c]) these words are added: "The mother of the Lord and his brethren said unto him, John Baptist baptizeth to the remissions of sins; let us go and be baptized of him. He said unto them, What have I sinned, that I should go and be baptized of him?" And this part of the story is also told by Justin Martyr.[d] But Jesus wanted not a proposition to consign by his baptism proportionable enough to the analogy of its institution; for as others professed their return towards innocence, so he avowed his perseverance in it; and though he was never called in Scripture a sinner, yet he was made sin for us; that is, he did undergo the shame and the punishment; and therefore it was proper enough for him to perform the sacrament of sinners.

2. But the holy Jesus, who came (as himself, in answer to the Baptist's question, professed) "to fulfil all righteousness," would receive that rite, which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Son. For although the Baptist had a glimpse of him by the first irradiations of the Spirit, yet John professed, that he therefore came baptizing with water, that "Jesus might be manifested to Israel;[e] and it was also a sign given

[r] Vide Disc. Of Temptation.
[a] Gabriel Sotus, Scotus, &c.
[b] Προοίμιον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς χάριτος.—Acts xix. 4.
[c] Quæst. ad Orthod. 73.
[d] Dial. 3. advers. Pelag.

[e] Ἐβαπτίσθη δὲ καὶ ἐνήστευσεν (Ἰησοῦς,) οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπορυπώσεως ἢ νηστείας χρείαν ἔχων ἢ καθάρσεως, ὁ τῇ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα καὶ Ἰωάννῃ ἀληθειαν προσμαρτυρήσῃ, καὶ ὑμῖν ὑπογραμμὸν παράσχηται.—CLEM. Constit. Apost. lib. vii. c. 23.

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to the Baptist himself, that "on whomsoever he saw the Spirit descending and remaining," he is the person "that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And God chose to actuate the sign at the waters of Jordan, in great and religious assemblies, convened there at John's baptism; and therefore Jesus came to be baptized, and, by this baptism became known to John, who, as before he gave to him an indiscriminate testimony, so now he pointed out the person in his sermons and discourses, and, by calling him the Lamb of God,[f] prophesied of his passion, and preached him to be the world's Redeemer, and the sacrifice for mankind. He was now manifest to Israel; he confirmed the baptism of John; he sanctified the water to become sacramental and ministerial in the remission of sins; he by a real event declared, that to them, who should rightly be baptized, the kingdom of heaven should certainly be opened; he inserted himself, by that ceremony, into the society and participation of holy people, of which communion himself was Head and Prince; and he did, in a symbol, purify human nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken.

3. As soon as John had performed his ministry, and Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened, and the air clarified by a new and glorious light;[g] "and the Holy Ghost, in the manner of a dove, alighted upon" his sacred head, and God the Father gave "a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Messias, when he began to be the great Prophet of the new covenant. And this was the greatest meeting that ever was upon earth, where the whole cabinet of the mysterious Trinity was opened and shown, as much as the capacities of our present imperfections will permit; the second person in the veil of humanity, the third in the shape, or with the motion, of a dove;[h] but the first kept his primitive state; and as to the Israelites he gave notice by way of caution, "Ye saw no shape, but ye heard a voice;" so now also God the Father gave testimony to his holy Son, and appeared only in a voice, without any visible representment.

4. When the right and the solemnity was over, "Christ ascended up out of the waters, and left so much virtue behind him, that, as Gregorius Turonensis reports,[i] that creek of the river, where his holy body had been baptized, was endued with a healing quality, and a power of curing lepers, that bathed themselves in those waters, in the faith and with invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But the manifestation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet Jesus did no miracles.

5. As soon as ever the Saviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heavens, which yet never had been opened to man, and was declared the Son of God, "Jesus was, by the Spirit, driven into the wilderness," not by an unnatural violence, but by the efficacies of inspiration, and a supernatural inclination and activity of resolution; for it was the Holy Spirit that bare him thither; he was led by the good Spirit to be tempted by the evil: whither also he was pleased to retire, to make demonstration, that even in an active life, such as he was designed to and intended, some recesses and temporary demissions of the world are most expedient, for such persons especially, whose office is prophetical, and for institution of others, that, by such vacancies in prayer and contemplation, they may be better enabled to teach others, when they have in such retirements conversed with God.

6. In the desert, which was four miles from the place of his baptism, and about twenty miles from Jerusalem, as the common computations are, he did abide "forty days and forty nights," where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual fast, without eating bread or drinking water; "and the angels ministered to him," being messengers of comfort and sustentation, sent from his Father, for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and temporal hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

7. Whether the devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shapes, is not certain; but it is more likely, to a person of so great sanctity and high designation, they would appear more angelical and immaterial, in representments intellectual, in words and ideas, temptations and enticements, because Jesus was not a person of those low weaknesses to be affrighted or troubled with an ugly phantasm, which can do nothing but abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of persons nothing extraordinary. And this was the way, which Satan, or the prince of the devils, took, whose temptations were reserved for the last assault, and the great day of trial; for at the expiration of his forty days, Jesus being hungry, the tempter invited him only to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity, and prove his Divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed. "But Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God:" meaning, that in every word of God, whether the commandment be general or special, a promise is either expressed or implied of the supply of all provisions necessary for him, that is doing the work of God; and that was the present case of Jesus, who was then doing his Father's work, and promoting our interest, and therefore was sure to be provided for: and therefore so are we.

8. The devil, having failed in his assault, tries him again, requiring but a demonstration of his being the Son of God. He "sets him upon the battlement of the temple,"[k] and invites him to

[f] Symbolum supplicii crucis.—JUST. MART.

[g] Καὶ εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα.—EVANG. Ebion.

[h] Ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν, Matt. iii. 16. Mark i. 10. Ἐν σωματικῷ εἴδει, Luke iii. 22.

[i] De Gloria Martyr. cap. xvii.

[k] Πτερύγιον, ἀκρωτήριον, τὸ ἐπάνω τῶν ναῶν ἀνατιθέμενον ζώδιον.

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throw himself down, upon a pretence that God would send his angels to keep his Son, and quotes Scripture for it. But Jesus understood it well; and though he was secured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God, nor solicit his providence to a dereliction, by tempting him to an unnecessary conservation. This assault was silly and weak. But at last he unites all his power of stratagem, and places the holy Jesus upon an exceeding high mountain, and, by an angelical power, draws into one centre species and ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world,[1] and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of Jesus, saying, that all that was put into his power to give, and he "would give it him, if he would fall down and worship him." But then the holy Lamb was angry as a provoked lion, and commanded him away, when his temptations were violent, and his demands impudent and blasphemous. "Then the devil leaveth him, and the angels came and ministered unto him," bringing such things as his necessities required, after he had, by a forty days' fast, done penance for our sins, and consigned to his church the doctrine and discipline of fasting in order to a contemplative life, and the resisting and overcoming all the temptations and allurements of the devil, and all our ghostly enemies.

Ad SECTION IX.

Considerations upon the Baptizing, Fasting, and Temptation of the Holy Jesus by the Devil.

1. WHEN the day did break, and the Baptist was busy in his offices, the Sun of righteousness soon entered upon our hemisphere; and after he had lived a life of darkness and silence for thirty years together, yet now that he came to do the greatest work in the world, and to minister in the most honourable embassy, he would do nothing of singularity, but fulfil all righteousness, and satisfy all commands, and join in the common rites and sacraments, which all people, innocent or penitent, did undergo, either as deleteries of sin or instruments of grace. For so he would needs be baptized by his servant; and though he was of purity sufficient to do it, and did actually, by his baptism, purify the purifier, and sanctify that and all other streams to a holy ministry and effect, yet he went in, bowing his head like a sinner, unclothing himself like an imperfect person, and craving to be washed, as if he had been crusted with an impure leprosy; thereby teaching us to submit ourselves to all those rites which he would institute; and although some of them be, like the baptism of John, joined with confession of sins, and publication of our infirmities, yet it were better for us to lay by our loads, and wash our ulcers, than by concealing them, out of vainer desires of impertinent reputation, cover our disease till we are heartsick and die. But when so holy a person does all the pious ministries of the more imperfect, it is a demonstration to us, that a life common and ordinary, without affectation or singularity, is the most prudent and safe. Every great change, every violence of fortune, all eminences and unevennesses whatsoever, whether of person, or accident, or circumstance, puts us to a new trouble, requires a distinct care, creates new dangers, objects more temptations, marks us out the objects of envy, makes our standing more insecure, and our fall more contemptible and ridiculous. But an even life, spent with as much rigour of duty to God as ought to be, yet in the same manner of devotions, in the susception of ordinary offices, in bearing public burdens, frequenting public assemblies, performing offices of civility, receiving all the rites of an established religion, complying with national customs, and hereditary solemnities of a people; in nothing disquieting public peace, or disrelishing the great instruments of an innocent communion, or dissolving the circumstantial ligaments of charity, or breaking laws, and the great relations and necessitudes of the world, out of fancy or singularity, is the best way to live holily, and safely, and happily; safer from sin and envy, and more removed from trouble and temptation.

2. When Jesus came to John to be baptized, John, out of humility and modesty, refused him; but when Jesus, by reduplication of his desire, fortifying it with a command, made it in the Baptist to become a duty, then he obeyed. And so also did the primitive clerks refuse to do offices of great dignity and highest ministry; looking through the honour upon the danger, and, passing by the dignity, they considered the charge of the cure, and knew that the eminence of the office was in all senses insecure to the person, till, by command and peremptory injunction of their superiors, it was put past a dispute, and became necessary, and that either they must perish instantly in the ruins and precipices of disobedience, or put it to the hazard and a fair venture, for a brighter crown or a bigger damnation. I wish also this care were entailed, and did descend upon all ages of the church; for the ambitious seeking of dignities and prelacies ecclesiastical, is grown the pest of the church, and corrupts the salt itself, and extinguishes the lights, and gives too apparent evidences to the world, that neither the end is pure, nor the intention sanctified, nor the person innocent, but the purpose ambitious or covetous, and the person vicious; and the very entrance into church-offices is with an impure torch, and a foul hand, or a heart empty of the affections of religion, or thoughts of doing God's work. I do not think the present age is to be treated with, concerning denying to accept rich prelacies and pompous dignities; but it were but reasonable that the main intention and intellectual design should be, to appreciate and esteem the office and employment to be of greatest consideration. It is lawful to desire a bishoprick; neither can the unwillingness to accept it be, in a prudent account, adjudged the aptest disposition to receive it (especially if done in ceremony,[a] just in

[1] *Φαινόμενα ἐν τῷ ἀέρι φαντάσματα ἄστατα ὄντα καὶ ἀβέβαια.*

[a] In Pontifical. Rom.

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the instant of their entertainment of it, and possibly after a long ambition): but yet it were well if we remember, that such desires must be sanctified with holy care and diligence in the office; for the honey is guarded with thousands of little sharp stings and dangers; and it will be a sad account, if we be called to audit for the crimes of our diocese, after our own tallies are made even; and he that believes his own load to be big enough, and trembles at the apprehension of the horrors of dooms-day, is not very wise, if he takes up those burdens, which he sees have crushed their bearers, and presses his own shoulders till the bones crack, only because the bundles are wrapped in white linen, and bound with silken cords. "He that desires the office of a bishop, desires a good work," saith St. Paul: and therefore we must not look on it for the fair-spreading sails and the beauteous streamers, which the favour of princes hath put to it, to make it sail fairer and more secure against the dangers of secular discomforts; but upon the burden it bears. Prelacy is a good work; and a good work well done is very honourable, and shall be rewarded; but he that considers the infinite dangers of miscarrying, and that the loss of the ship will be imputed to the pilot, may think it many times the safest course, to put God or his superiors to the charge of a command, before he undertakes such great ministries: and he that enters in by the force of authority, as he himself receives a testimony of his worth and aptness to the employment, so he gives the world another, that his search for it was not criminal, nor his person immodest; and by his weighty apprehension of his dangers he will consider his work, and obtain a grace to do it diligently, and to be accepted graciously. And this was the modesty and prudence of the Baptist.

3. "When Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened." External rites of Divine institution, receive benediction and energy from above, but it is by the mediation of prayer;[b] for there is nothing ritual, but it is also joined with something moral, and required, on our part, in all persons capable of the use of reason, that we may understand, that the blessings of religion are works and graces too: God, therefore, requiring us to do something, not that we may glory in it, but that we may estimate the grace, and go to God for it in the means of his own hallowing. Naaman had been stupid, if, when the prophet bade him wash seven times in Jordan for his cure, he had not confessed the cure to be wrought by the God of Israel, and the ministry of his prophet, but had made himself the author, because of his obedience to the enjoined condition; and it is but a weak fancy to derogate from God's grace, and the glory and the freedom of it, because he bids us wash before we are cleansed, and pray when we are washed, and commands us to ask before we shall receive. But this also is true, from this instance, that the external rite of sacrament is so instrumental in a spiritual grace, that it never does it but with the conjunction of something moral; and this truth is of so great persuasion in the Greek church,[c] that the mystery of consecration in the venerable eucharist is amongst them attributed not to any mystical words and secret operations of syllables, but to the efficacy of the prayers of the church, in the just imitation of the whole action and the rite of institution. And the purpose of it is, that we might secure the excellence and holiness of such predispositions and concomitant graces, which are necessary to the worthy and effectual susception of the external rites of christianity.

4. After the holy Jesus was baptized, and had prayed, the heavens opened,[d] the Holy Ghost descended, and a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the Son of God, and one in whom the Father was well pleased; and the same ointment, that was cast upon the head of our High Priest, went unto his beard, and thence fell to the borders of his garment: for as Christ, our Head, felt these effects in manifestation, so the church believes God does to her, and to her meanest children, in the susception of the holy rite of baptism, in right, apt, and holy dispositions. For the heavens open, too, upon us; and the Holy Ghost descends, to sanctify the waters, and to hallow the catechumen, and to pardon the past and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and give him the sacrament and oath of fidelity; for all this is understood to be meant by those frequent expressions of Scripture, calling baptism "the laver of regeneration, illumination, a washing away the filth of the flesh, and the answer of a good conscience, a being buried with Christ,"[e] and many others of the like purpose and signification. But we may also learn hence, sacredly to esteem the rites of religion, which he first sanctified by his own personal susception, and then made necessary by his own institution and command, and God hath made to be conveyances of blessing, and ministries of the Holy Spirit.

5. "The Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus, in the manner or visible representment of a dove;" either in similitude or figure, which he was pleased to assume, as the church more generally hath believed; or at least he did descend like a dove, and in his robe of fire hovered over the Baptist's head, and then "sat upon him," as the dove uses to sit upon the house of her dwelling; whose proprieties of nature are pretty and modest hieroglyphics of the duty of spiritual persons, which are thus observed in both philosophies. The dove sings not, but mourns; it hath no gall,[f] strikes not with its bill, hath no crooked talons, and forgets its young ones soonest of any of the inhabitants of the air. And the effects of the Holy Spirit are symbolical in all the sons of

[b] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3. Gal. iii. 14, 27. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xii. 7, 13. Matt. iii. 2, 6.

[c] Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. Euseb. Emiss. Serm. 5. de Pasch. S. August. lib. iii. c. 4. de Trin.

[d] Quòd Christus vidit cœlos apertos, nostrî utique gratiâ factum est, quibus per lavacrum undæ regeneratricis janua panditur regni cœlestis.—BEDA in Matt. lib. i. c. 1.

[e] Eph. v. 26. Heb. x. 32. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. vi. 4.

[f] Scil. in hepate; habet autem in intestino.

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sanctification: for the voice of the church is sad in those accents, which express her own condition: but as the dove is not so sad in her breast as in her note, so neither is the interior condition of the church wretched and miserable, but indeed her song is most of it elegy within her own walls, and her condition looks sad, and her joys are not pleasures in the public estimate; but they that afflict her, think her miserable, because they know not the sweetnesses of a holy peace and serenity which supports her spirit, and plains the heart under a rugged brow, making the soul festival under the noise of a threne and sadder groanings. But the sons of consolation are also taught their duty by this apparition; for upon whomsoever the Spirit descends, he teaches him to be meek and charitable, neither offending by the violence of hands nor looser language. For the dove is inoffensive in beak and foot, and feels no disturbance and violence of passions, when its dearest interests are destroyed; that we also may be of an even spirit in the saddest accidents, which usually discompose our peace: and however such symbolical intimations receive their efficacy from the fancy of the contriver; yet here, whether this apparition did intend any such moral representment or no, it is certain, that wherever the Holy Spirit does dwell, there also peace and sanctity, meekness and charity, a mortified will, and an active dereliction of our desires, do inhabit. But besides this hieroglyphical representment, this dove, like that which Noah sent out from the ark, did aptly signify the world to be renewed, and all to be turned to a new creation; and God hath made a new covenant with us, that, unless we provoke him, he will never destroy us any more.

6. No sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the well-beloved Son of God, but the devil thought it of great concernment to attempt him, with all his malice and his art; and that is the condition of all those, whom God's grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world: and therefore the son of Sirach gave good advice, "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation;"[g] for not only the spirits of darkness are exasperated at the declension of their own kingdom, but also the nature and constitution of virtues and eminent graces, which holy persons exercise in their lives, is such as to be easily assailable by their contraries, apt to be lessened by time, to be interrupted by weariness, to grow flat and insipid by tediousness of labour, to be omitted and grow infrequent, by the impertinent diversions of society and secular occasions; so that to rescind the ligaments of vice, made firm by nature and evil habits; to acquire every new degree of virtue, to continue the holy fires of zeal in their just proportion, to overcome the devil, and to reject the invitations of the world, and the softer embraces of the flesh, which are the proper employment of the sons of God, is a perpetual difficulty; and every possibility of prevaricating the strictness of a duty, is a temptation, and an insecurity to them who have begun to serve God in hard battles.

7. The Holy Spirit did drive Jesus into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. And though we are bound to pray instantly, that we fall into no temptation; yet if, by Divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we be engaged in an action or course of life, that is full of temptation, and empty of comfort, let us apprehend it as an issue of Divine Providence, as an occasion of the rewards of diligence and patience, as an instrument of virtue, as a designation of that way, in which we must glorify God; but no argument of disfavour, since our dearest Lord, the most holy Jesus, who could have driven the devil away by the breath of his mouth, yet was, by the Spirit of his Father, permitted to a trial and molestation by the spirits of darkness. And this is St. James's counsel: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations; knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience."[h] So far is a blessing, when the Spirit is the instrument of our motion, and brings us to the trial of our faith: but if the Spirit leaves us, and delivers us over to the devil, not to be tempted, but to be abused and ruined, it is a sad condition, and the greatest instance of their infelicity, whom the church, upon sufficient reason, and with competent authority, delivers over to Satan, by the infliction of the greater excommunication.

8. As soon as it was permitted to the devil to tempt our Lord, he, like fire, had no power to suspend his act, but was as entirely determined by the fulness of his malice, as a natural agent by the appetites of nature; that we may know, to whom we owe the happinesses of all those hours and days of peace, in which we sit under the trees of paradise, and see no serpent encircling the branches, and presenting us with fair fruit, to ruin us. It is the mercy of God we have the quietness of a minute; for if the devil's chain were taken off, he would make our very beds a torment; our tables to be a snare; our sleeps fantastic, lustful, and illusive: and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an hyena to kiss, and to perish in its embraces. But the holy Jesus having been assaulted by the devil, and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so merciful a High Priest, and so sensible of our sufferings and danger, by the apprehensions of compassion, that he hath put a hook into the nostrils of Leviathan; and although the relics of seven nations be in our borders and fringes of our country, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest forty years; and when the storm came, some remedy was found out by his grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up: and we find many persons, who in seven years meet not with a violent temptation to a crime, but their battles are against impediments and retardations of improvement; their own rights are not directly questioned, but the devil and sin are wholly upon the defensive. Our duty here is an act of affection to God, making returns of thanks for the protection, and of duty, to secure and continue the favour.

9. But the design of the Holy Ghost being to

[g] Ecclus. ii. 1.

[h] James i. 2, 3.

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expose Jesus to the temptation, he arms himself with fasting, and prayer, and baptism, and the Holy Spirit, against the day of battle; he continues in the wilderness forty days and forty nights, without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God; not suffering the interruption of meals, but representing his own and the necessities of all mankind, with such affections and instances of spirit, love, and wisdom, as might express the excellency of his person, and promote the work of our redemption; his conversation being, in this interval, but a resemblance of angelical perfection, and his fasts not an instrument of mortification,[i] for he needed none; he had contracted no stain from his own nor his parents' acts; neither do we find, that he was at all hungry, or afflicted with his abstinence, till after the expiration of forty days. He was afterwards "an hungred," said the evangelist; and his abstinence from meat might be a defecation of his faculties, and an opportunity of prayer, but we are not sure it intended any thing else. But it may concern the prudence of religion, to snatch at this occasion of duty, so far as the instance is imitable; and in all violences of temptation to fast and pray, prayer being a rare antidote against the poison, and fasting a convenient disposition to intense, actual, and undisturbed prayer. And we may remember also, that we have been baptized and consigned with the Spirit of God,[k] and have received the adoption of sons, and the graces of sanctification, in our baptisms, and had then the seed of God put into us; and then we put on Christ; and entering into battle, put on the whole armour of righteousness; and therefore we may, by observing our strength, gather also our duty and greatest obligation, to fight manfully, that we may triumph gloriously.

10. The devil's first temptation of Christ was upon the instances and first necessities of nature; Christ was hungry, and the devil invited him to break his fast upon the expense of a miracle, by turning the stones into bread. But the answer Jesus made, was such as taught us, since the ordinary providence of God is sufficient for our provision or support, extraordinary ways of satisfying necessities are not to be undertaken; but God must be relied upon, his time attended, his manner entertained, and his measure thankfully received. Jesus refused to be relieved, and denied to manifest the Divinity of his person, rather than he would do an act, which had in it the intimation of a diffident spirit, or might be expounded a disreputation to God's providence. And, therefore, it is an improvident care and impious security, to take evil courses, and use vile instruments, to furnish our table, and provide for our necessities. God will certainly give us bread; and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the word of God, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises; for if God gives not provisions into our granaries, he can feed us out of his own, that is, out of the repositories of charity. If the flesh-pots be removed, he can also alter the appetite; and when our stock is spent, he can also lessen the necessity; or if that continues, he can drown the sense of it in a deluge of patience and resignation. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and the spirit, by the comforts of this to support that, that they may bear each other's burden, and alleviate the pressure.

11. But the devil is always prompting us to change our stones into bread, our sadnesses into sensual comfort, our drynesses into inundations of fancy and exterior sweetnesses: for he knows, that the ascetic tables of mortification and the stones of the desert, are more healthful than the fulnesses of voluptuousness and the corn of the valleys. He cannot endure we should live a life of austerity or self-denial: if he can get us but to satisfy our senses, and a little more freely to please our natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle; but so long as we force him to fight in hedges and morasses, encircling and crowding up his strengths into disadvantages, by our stone walls, our hardnesses of discipline and rudenesses of mortification, we can with more facility repel his flatteries, and receive fewer incommodities of spirit. But thus the devil will abuse us by the impotency of our natural desires; and therefore let us go to God for satisfaction of our wishes. God can and does, when it is good for us, change our stones into bread: for he is a Father so merciful, that "if we ask him a fish, he will not give us a scorpion; if we ask him bread, he will not offer us a stone;" but will satisfy all our desires by ministrations of the Spirit, making stones to become our meat, and tears our drink; which, although they are unpleasant and harsh to natural appetites, yet, by the operation and influences of God's Holy Spirit, they are made instruments of health, and life, and salvation.

12. The devil, perceiving Jesus to be a person of greater eminence and perfection, than to be moved by sensual and low desires, makes a second assault, by a temptation something more spiritual, and tempts him to presumption and indiscreet confidence, to a throwing himself down from the pinnacles of the temple; upon the stock of predestination, that God might secure him by the ministry of angels, and so prove his being the Son of God. And indeed it is usual with the devil, when severe persons have so much mortified their lower appetites, that they are not easily overcome by an invitation of carnality or intemperance, to stir them to opinions of their own sanctity, and make their first escaping prove their second and greater dangers. But that the devil should persuade Jesus to throw himself down, be-

[i] ΕΙΣ' ὅταν τῆς χάριτος καταξιωθῇς, τότε σοι πρὸς ἀντικειμένας δυνάμεις παλαίειν δίδωσι τὴν ἐξουσίαν. ὥσπερ γὰρ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας ἐπειράτο, οὐχ ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τούτου νικᾶν οὐκ ἐδύνατο, ἀλλ' ὅτι πάντα τάξει καὶ ἀκολουθίᾳ πράττειν ἐβούλετο· οὕτω καὶ σὺ πρὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις παλαίειν μὴ τολμήσας, λαβὼν δὲ τὴν χάριν καὶ λοιπὸν θαρσῶν τοῖς τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὅπλοις, ἀγωνίζου τότε, καὶ εἰ θέλεις εὐαγγελίζου.—CYRIL. Hier. Cat. 3.

[k] Ἐάν σοι προσβάλῃ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὁ τοῦ φωδιώκτης καὶ πειραστὴς, προσβαλεῖ δὲ, (καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ καὶ θεῷ μου προσέβαλε διὰ τὸ κάλυμμα, τῷ κρυπτῷ φωτὶ διὰ τὸ φαινόμενον) ἔχεις ᾧ νικήσεις· μὴ φοβηθῇς τὸν ἀγῶνα· προβαλοῦ τὸ ὕδωρ, προβαλοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα, ἐν ᾧ πάντα τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ τὰ πεπυρωμένα σβεσθήσεται· πνεῦμα μέν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ διαλύον δρῃ· ὕδωρ μέν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ πυρὸς σβεστήριον.—NAZIAN. Orat. in S. Bapt.

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cause he was the Son of God, was an invitation to no purpose, save only that it gave occasion to this truth, That God's providence secures all his sons in the ways of nature, and while they are doing their duty; but loves not to be tempted to acts unreasonable and unnecessary. God will protect his servants in or from all evils happening without their knowledge, or against their will; but not from evils of their own procuring. Heron, an inhabitant of the desert, suffered the same temptation, and was overcome by it; for he died with his fall, sinfully and ingloriously. For the caresses of God's love to his saints and servants are security against all but themselves. The devil and all the world offer to do them mischief, but then they shall be safe, because they are innocent; if they once offer to do the same to themselves, they lose their protection, because they lost their prudence and their charity. But here, also, it will concern all those, who, by their eminent employment, and greater ministries in ecclesiasticals, are set upon the pinnacle of the temple, to take care that the devil tempt not them to a precipice; a fall from so great a height will break the bones in pieces: and yet there also the station is less firm, the posture most uneasy, the prospect vertiginous, and the devil busy, and desirous to thrust us headlong.

13. St. Hierom here observes well,[1] the devil intending mischief to our blessed Saviour, invited him "to cast himself down." He may persuade us to a fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in God, that the devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrained and limited a power, that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it ourselves. And then it will be a strange imprudence to lay violent and unreasonable hands on ourselves, and do that mischief which our strongest and most malicious adversary cannot; or to be invited by the only rhetoric of a dog's barking, to come near him, to untie his chain, to unloose his muzzle, for no other end but that we may be bitten. Just such a fool is every person that consents to the temptations of the devil.

14. By this time the devil began to perceive that this was the Son of God, and designed to be the King of all the world, and therefore resolved, for the last assault, to proffer him the kingdoms of the world; thinking ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that which prevailed upon himself, and all those fallen stars, the angels of darkness. That the devil told a lie is most likely, when he said, he had power to dispose the kingdoms of the world; for originally, and by proper inherent right, God alone disposes all governments: but it is also certain, that the devil is a person capable of a delegate employment, in some great mutation of states; and many probabilities have been observed by wise personages, persuading that the grandeur of the Roman empire was, in the degrees of increment and decrement, permitted to the power and managing of the devil; that the greatness of that government, being in all appearance full of advantage to Satan's kingdom, and employed for the disimprovement of the weak beginnings and improbable increase of christianity, might give lustre and demonstration to it, that it came from God; since the great permissions of power made to the devil, and acted with all art and malice in defiance of the religion, could produce no other effect upon it, but that it made it grow greater; and the greatness was made more miraculous, since the devil, when his chain was off, fain would, but could not, suppress it.

15. The Lamb of God, that heard him with patience tempt him to do himself a mischief, and to throw himself headlong, could by no means endure it, when he tempted to a direct dishonouring of God. Our own injuries are opportunities of patience; but when the glory of God, and his immediate honour, is the question, then is the occasion and precise minute for the flames of a clear-shining and unconsuming zeal. But the care of God's glory had so filled and employed all the faculties of Jesus, that he takes no notice of the offer: and it were well, also, that we had fewer opinions of the lustre of worldly dignities; or at least that we, in imitation of our blessed Master, should refuse to accept all the world, when it is to be bought of the devil, at the expense of a deadly sin. For that government cannot be very honourable, that makes us slaves to the worst of tyrants; and all those princes and great personages, who, by injury and usurpation, possess and invade others' rights, would do well to consider, that a kingdom is too dearly paid for, if the condition be first to worship the devil.

16. When the devil could do no good, "he departed for a time." If he could ever have spied a time of returning, he wanted not will nor malice to observe and use it; and although Jesus was a person without danger, yet I doubt not but the Holy Ghost described that circumstance, that we should not have the securities of a deep peace, when we have had the success of conquerors, for a surprise is most full of horror and of more certain ruin; so that we have no security, but a perpetual observation; that, together with the grace of God, (who takes care of all his servants, and will drive away the tempter when he pleases, and help us always when we need,) is as great an argument for our confidence, and encouragement to our prayers and address to God, as it is safety to our person, and honour to our victory. And let us account it our honour, that the trials of temptation, which is the greatest sadness of our condition, are hallowed by the temptation of Jesus, and our condition assured by his assistances, and the assistances procured by our prayers most easily upon the advantage of his sufferings and compassion. And we may observe, that poverty, predestination, and ambition, are the three quivers, from which the devil drew his arrows, which (as the most likely to prevail) he shot against Christ: but now he shot in vain, and gave probation that he might be overcome; our Captain hath conquered for himself and us. By these instances we see our danger, and how we are provided of a remedy.

[1] S. Hieron. in 4 cap. Matt.

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THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, who didst fulfil all righteousness, and didst live a life of evenness and obedience, and community, submitting thyself to all rites and sanctions of Divine ordinance; give me grace to live, in the fellowship of thy holy church, a life of piety, and without singularity, receiving the sweet influence of thy sacraments and rites, and living in the purities and innocencies of my first sanctification. I adore thy goodness infinite, that thou hast been pleased to wash my soul in the laver of regeneration, that thou hast consigned me to the participation of thy favours by the holy eucharist. Let me not return to the infirmities of the old man, whom thou hast crucified on thy cross, and who was buried with thee in baptism; nor renew the crimes of my sinful years, which were so many recessions from baptismal purities: but let me ever receive the emissions of thy Divine Spirit, and be a son of God, a partner of thine immortal inheritance; and when thou seest it needful, let me receive testimony from heaven, that I am thy servant and thy child. And grant that I may so walk, that I neither disrepute the honour of the christian institution, nor stain the whitenesses of that innocence, which thou didst invest my soul withal, when I put on the baptismal robe, nor break my holy vow, nor lose my right of inheritance, which thou hast given me by promise and grace; but that thou mayest love me with the love of a father, and a brother, and a husband, and a lord, and I serve thee in the communion of saints, in the susception of sacraments, in the actions of a holy life, and in a never-failing love or uninterrupted devotion; to the glory of thy name, and the promotion of all those ends of religion, which thou hast designed in the excellent economy of christianity. Grant this, holy Jesus, for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of thy name, which is, and shall be, adored for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE V.

Of Temptation.

1. GOD, who is the fountain of good, did choose rather to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer any evil to be: not only because variety of accidents and natures do better entertain our affections, and move our spirits, who are transported and suffer great impressions by a circumstance, by the very opposition, and accidental lustre and eminency, of contraries; but also that the glory of the Divine Providence, in turning the nature of things into the designs of God, might be illustrious; and that we may, in a mixed condition, have more observation, and, after our danger and our labour, may obtain a greater reward: for temptation is the opportunity of virtue and a crown; God having disposed us in such a condition, that our virtues must be difficult, our inclinations averse and corrigible, our avocations many, our hostilities bitter, our dangers proportionable, that our labour might be great, our inclinations suppressed and corrected, our intentions be made actual, our enemies be resisted, and our dangers pass into security and honour, after a contestation, and a victory, and a perseverance. It is every man's case; trouble[a] is as certainly the lot of our nature and inheritance, and we are so sure to be tempted, that in the deepest peace and silence of spirit oftentimes is our greatest danger; not to be tempted, is sometimes our most subtle temptation. It is certain, then, we cannot be secure when our security is our enemy; but therefore we must do as God himself does, make the best of it, and not be sad at that, which is the public portion and the case of all men, but order it according to the intention, place it in the eye of virtue, that all its actions and motions may tend thither, there to be changed into felicities. But certain it is, unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but, by incision and contusions, our roughnesses may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be, either for the temple or the altar, spiritual building or holy fire, something that God shall delight in, and then the temptation was not amiss.

2. And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation, no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing: and although St. Paul was a person, whose prayers were likely to be prevalent, and his industry of much prudence and efficacy toward the drawing out of his thorn; yet God would not do it, but continued his war, only promising to send him succour, "My grace is sufficient for thee;"[b] meaning, he should have an enemy to try his spirit and improve it, and he should also have God's grace to comfort and support it; but as, without God's grace, the enemy would spoil him, so without an enemy God's grace would never swell up into glory and crown him. For the caresses of a pleasant fortune are apt to swell into extravagances of spirit, and burst into the dissolution of manners; and unmixed joy is dangerous: but if, in our fairest flowers, we spy a locust, or feel the uneasiness of a sackcloth under our fine linen, or our purple be tied with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a death's head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection.

3. Since, therefore, it is no part of our employ-

[a] Erras, mi frater, erras, si putas unquam christianum persecutionem non pati. Tunc maximè oppugnaris, si te oppugnari nescis.—S. HIER. ad Heliod.

[b] 2 Cor. xii. 9.

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ment or our care, to be free from all the attempts of an enemy, but to be safe in despite of his hostility; it now will concern us to inform ourselves of the state of the war in general, and then to make provisions, and to put on armour accordingly.

4. First: St. Cyprian[c] often observes, and makes much of the discourse, that the devil, when he intends a battery, first views the strength and situation of the place. His sense, drawn out of the cloud of an allegory, is this: The devil first considers the constitution and temper of the person he is to tempt, and where he observes his natural inclination apt for a vice, he presents him with objects, and opportunity, and arguments fitting to his caitive disposition; from which he is likely to receive the smaller opposition, since there is a party within that desires his intromission. Thus, to lustful natures, he represents the softer whispers of the spirit of fornication; to the angry and revengeful, he offers to consideration the satisfactions and content of a full revenge, and the emissions of anger; to the envious he makes panegyrics of our rivals, and swells our fancies to opinion, our opinion to self-love, self-love to arrogance, and these are supported by contempt of others, and all determine upon envy, and expire in malice. Now, in these cases, when our natures are caitive and unhandsome, it were good we were conscious of our own weaknesses, and, by special arts and strengths of mortification, fortify that part, where we are apt and exposed to danger: we are sure enough to meet a storm there, and we also are likely to perish in it, unless we correct those aversenesses and natural indispositions, and reduce them to the evennesses of virtue, or the affections and moderation of a good nature. Let us be sure, that the devil take not a helve from our own branches to fit his axe, that so he may cut the tree down: and certainly he that does violence to his nature, will not be easy to the entertainment of affections preternatural and violent.

5. Secondly: But the devil also observes all our exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities of action; he sees what company we keep, he observes what degrees of love we have to our wives, what looseness of affection towards children, how prevalent their persuasions, how inconvenient their discourses, how trifling their interests, and to what degrees of determination they move us by their importunity or their power. The devil tempted Adam by his wife, because he saw his affections too pliant, and encircling her with the entertainment of fondness, joy, wonder, and amorous fancy; it was her hand that made the fruit beauteous to Adam; "she saw it fair" of itself, "and so she ate;" but Adam was not moved by that argument, but, "The woman gave it me, and I did eat:" she gave vivacity to the temptation, and efficacy to the argument. And the severity of the man's understanding would have given a reasonable answer to the insinuations of the serpent: that was an ugly beast, and his arguments not being of themselves convincing to a wise person, either must put on advantages of a fair insinuation and representment, or they are returned with scorn. But when the beauteous hands of his young virgin-mistress[d] became the orators, the temptation was an amorevolezza; he kisses the presenter, and hugs the ruin. Here, therefore, is our safest course, to make a retrenchment of all those excrescences of affections, which, like the wild and irregular sucker, draw away nourishment from the trunk, making it as sterile as itself is unprofitable. As we must restrain the inclinations of nature, so also of society and relation when they become inconvenient, and let nothing of our family be so adopted, or naturalized into our affections, as to create within us a new concupiscence, and a second time spoil our nature: what God intended to us for a help, let not our fondnesses convert into a snare; and he that is not ready to deny the importunities, and to reject the interests, of a wife, or child, or friend, when the question is for God, deserves to miss the comforts of a good, and to feel the troubles of an imperious, woman.

6. Thirdly: We also have ends and designs of our own, some great purpose, upon which the greatest part of our life turns; it may be, we are to raise a family, to recover a sunk estate; or else ambition, honour, or a great employment, is the great hinge of all our greater actions; and some men are apt to make haste to be rich, or are to pass through a great many difficulties to be honourable: and here the devil will swell the hopes, and obstruct the passages; he will heighten the desire, and multiply the business of access, making the concupiscence more impatient, and yet the way to the purchase of our purposes so full of employment and variety, that both the implacable desire, and the multitude of changes and transactions, may increase the danger, and multiply the sin. When the enemy hath observed our ends, he makes his temptations to reflect from that angle which is direct upon them, provoking to malice and impatience against whomsoever we find standing in our way, whether willingly or by accident; then follow naturally all those sins, which are instrumental to removing the impediments, to facilitating the passage, to endearing our friends, to procuring more confidents, to securing our hopes, and entering upon possession. Simon Magus had a desire to be accounted some great one; and by that purpose he was tempted to sorcery and divination; and with a new object he brought a new sin into the world, adding simony to his sorcery, and taught posterity that crime, which, till then, had neither name nor being. And those ecclesiastics, who violently affect rich or pompous prelacies, pollute themselves with worldly arts, growing covetous as Syrian merchants, ambitious as the Levantine princes, factious as the people, revengeful as jealousy, and proud as conquerors and usurpers; and, by this means, beasts are brought into the temple, and the temple itself is exposed to sale, and the holy rites, as well as the beasts of sacrifice, are made venal. To prevent the infinite inconveniences, that thrust them-

[c] Serm. de Zelo.

[d] Habet namque voluptatem quandam admonitio uxoria, quum plurimùm ametur quod consulit.—S. CHRYSOST.

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selves into the common and great roads of our life, the best course is to cut our great channel into little rivulets, making our ends the more, that we may be indifferent to any, proposing nothing great, that our desires may be little; for so we shall be better able to digest the troubles of an enemy, the contradictions of an unhandsome accident, the crossing of our hopes; because our desires are even, and our ends are less considerable, and we can, with much readiness, divert upon another purpose, having another ready with the same proportion to our hopes and desires as the first. Thus, if we propound to ourselves an honest employment or a quiet retirement, a work of charity abroad or of devotion at home, if we miss in our first setting forth, we return to shore, where we can negociate with content, it being alike to us either to traffic abroad with more gain, or trade at home with more safety. But when we once grow great in our desires, fixing too earnestly upon one object, we either grow impatient, as Rachel, "Give me children, or I die;" or take ill courses and use unlawful means, as Thamar, choosing rather to lie with her father than to die without issue: or else are miserable in the loss and frustration of our hopes; like the women of Ramah, who "would not be comforted." Let, therefore, our life be moderate, our desires reasonable, our hopes little, our ends none in eminency and prelation above others:[e] for as the rays of light, passing through the thin air, end in a small and undiscerned pyramis, but, reflected upon a wall, are doubled, and increase the warmth to a scorching and troublesome heat; so the desires of man, if they pass through an even and indifferent life towards the issues of an ordinary and necessary course, they are little, and within command; but if they pass upon an end, or aim of difficulty or ambition, they duplicate, and grow to a disturbance: and we have seen the even and temperate lives of indifferent persons continue in many degrees of innocence; but the temptation of busy designs is too great, even for the best of dispositions.

7. But these temptations are crasse and material, and soon discernible; it will require some greater observation to arm against such as are more spiritual and immaterial. For he hath apples to cozen children, and gold for men; the kingdoms of the world for the ambition of princes, and the vanities of the world for the intemperate; he hath discourses and fair-spoken principles to abuse the pretenders to reason, and he hath common prejudices for the more vulgar understandings. Amongst these I choose to consider such, as are by way of principle or proposition.

8. The first great principle of temptation I shall note, is a general mistake, which excuses very many of our crimes upon pretence of infirmity, calling all those sins, to which by natural disposition we are inclined, (though, by carelessness and evil customs, they are heightened to a habit,) by the name of sins of infirmity; to which men suppose they have reason and title to pretend. If, when they have committed a crime, their conscience checks them, and they are troubled, and, during the interval and abatement of the heats of desire, resolve against it, and commit it readily at the next opportunity; then they cry out against the weakness of their nature, and think, as long as this body of death is about them, it must be thus, and that this condition may stand with the state of grace: and then the sins shall return periodically, like the revolutions of a quartan ague, well and ill for ever, till death surprises the mistaker. This is a patron of sins, and makes the temptation prevalent by an authentic instrument; and they pretend the words of St. Paul, "For the good that I would, that I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. For there is a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."[f] And thus the state of sin is mistaken for a state of grace, and the imperfections of the law are miscalled the affections and necessities of nature, that they might seem to be incurable, and the persons apt for an excuse, therefore, because for nature there is no absolute cure. But that these words of St. Paul may not become a savour of death, and instruments of a temptation to us, it is observable, that the apostle, by a fiction of person, (as is usual with him,[g]) speaks of himself, not as in the state of regeneration under the gospel, but under the difficulties, obscurities, insufficiencies, and imperfections of the law; which, indeed, he there contends to have been a rule good and holy, apt to remonstrate our misery, because by its prohibitions, and limits given to natural desires, it made actions (before indifferent) now to be sins; it added many curses to the breakers of it, and, by an efficacy of contrariety, it made us more desirous of what was now unlawful: but it was a covenant, in which our nature was restrained, but not helped; it was provoked, but not sweetly assisted; our understandings were instructed, but our wills not sanctified, and there were no suppletories of repentance; every greater sin was like the fall of an angel, irreparable by any mystery, or express, recorded or enjoined. Now of a man under this covenant he describes the condition to be such, that he understands his duty, but by the infirmities of nature he is certain to fall, and by the helps of the law not strengthened against it, nor restored after it; and therefore he calls himself, under that notion, "a miserable man, sold under sin," not doing according to the rules of law, or the dictates of his reason, but by the unaltered misery of his nature certain to prevaricate. But the person described here is not St. Paul, is not any justified person, not so much as a christian, but one who is under a state of direct opposition to the state of grace; as will manifestly appear, if we observe the antithesis from St. Paul's own characters. For the man here named is such, as in whom "sin wrought all concupiscence, in whom sin lived, and slew him," so

[e] Vim temperatam dii quoque provehunt
In majus: iidem odere vires
Omne nefas animo moventes.

[f] Rom. vii. 19, 23.

[g] Ut videre est, Rom. iii. 7 Gal. ii. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 12. and x. 23, 29, 30. and xiii. 2.

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that he was dead in trespasses and sins; and although he "did delight in the law after his inward man," that is, his understanding had intellectual complacencies and satisfactions, which afterwards he calls "serving the law of God with his mind," that is, in the first dispositions and preparations of his spirit, yet he could act nothing; for the law in his members did enslave him, "and brought him into captivity to the law of sin;"[h] so that this person was full of actual and effective lusts, he was a slave to sin, and dead in trespasses: but the state of a regenerate person is such, as to have "crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[i] in whom sin did not reign, not only in the mind, but even also not in the mortal body; over whom sin had no dominion; in whom the old man was crucified, and the body of sin was destroyed, and sin not at all served. And to make the antithesis yet clearer, in the very beginning of the next chapter the apostle saith, "That the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death;"[k] under which law, he complained immediately before he was sold and killed, to show the person was not the same in these so different and contradictory representments. No man in the state of grace can say, "The evil that I would not, that I do;" if, by evil, he means any evil that is habitual, or in its own nature deadly.

9. So that now let no man pretend an inevitable necessity to sin; for if ever it comes to a custom or to a great violation, though but in a single act, it is a condition of carnality, not of spiritual life; and those are not the infirmities of nature, but the weaknesses of grace, that make us sin so frequently; which the apostle truly affirms to the same purpose: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot (or that ye do not[l]) do the things that ye would."[m] This disability proceeds from the strength of the flesh, and weakness of the Spirit: for he adds, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law:" saying plainly, that the state of such a combat, and disability of doing good, is a state of man under the law, or in the flesh, which he accounts all one; but every man that is sanctified under the gospel is led by the Spirit, and walks in the Spirit, and brings forth the fruits of the Spirit. It is not our excuse, but the aggravation of our sin, that we fall again, in despite of so many resolutions to the contrary. And let us not flatter ourselves into a confidence of sin, by supposing the state of grace can stand with the custom of any sin: for it is the state either of an animalis homo, (as the apostle calls him,[n]) that is, a man in pure naturals, without the clarity of Divine revelations, who "cannot perceive or understand the things of God;" or else of the carnal man, that is, a person, who, though in his mind he is convinced, yet he is not yet freed from the dominion of sin, but only hath his eyes opened, but not his bonds loosed. For, by the perpetual analogy and frequent expresses in Scripture, the spiritual person, or the man "redeemed by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," is free from the law, and the dominion, and the kingdom, and the power of all sin. "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."[o]

10. But sins of infirmity, in true sense of Scripture, signify nothing but the sins of an unholy and unsanctified nature, when they are taken for actions done against the strength of resolution, out of the strength of natural appetite and violence of desire; and therefore, in Scripture, the state of sin and the state of infirmity is all one. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (saith the apostle[p]): the condition in which we were, when Christ became a sacrifice for us, was certainly a condition of sin and enmity with God, and yet this he calls a being without strength, or in a state of weakness and infirmity; which we, who believe all our strength to be derived from Christ's death, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of his ascension, may soon apprehend to be the true meaning of the word. And in this sense is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are weak:" for therefore "Christ came into the world to save sinners," those are the persons of Christ's infirmary, whose restitution and reduction to a state of life and health was his great design.[q] So that whoever sin habitually, that is, constantly, periodically, at the revolution of a temptation, or frequently, or easily, are persons who still remain in the state of sin and death; and their intervals of piety are but preparations to a state of grace, which they may then be, when they are not used to countenance or excuse the sin, or to flatter the person. But if the intermediate resolutions of emendation (though they never run beyond the next assault of passion or desire) be taken for a state of grace, blended with infirmities of nature, they become destructive of all those purposes, through our mistake, which they might have promoted, if they had been rightly understood, observed, and cherished. Sometimes, indeed, the greatness of a temptation may become an instrument to excuse some degrees of the sin, and make the man pitiable, whose ruin seems almost certain, because of the greatness and violence of the enemy, meeting with a natural aptness; but then the question will be, whither, and to what actions, that strong temptation carries him? whether to a work of a mortal nature, or only to a small irregularity? that is, whether to death, or to a wound? for whatever the principle be, if the effect be death, the man's case was therefore to be pitied, because his ruin was the more inevitable; not so pitied, as to excuse him from the state of death. For let the temptation be never so strong, every christian man hath assistances sufficient to support him, so as that, without his own yielding, no tempt-

[h] Rom. vii. 8, 11, 22, 23, 25.
[i] Gal. v. 24. Rom. vi. 6, 12, 14.
[k] Rom. viii. 2.
[l] Ἵνα μὴ ποιῆτε.
[m] Gal. v. 17.
[n] Rom. vii. 14.
[o] Rom. viii. 6.
[p] Rom. v. 6. Ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, τουτέστιν ἀσεβῶν, without strength, that is, ungodly.
[q] Vide August. lib. ii. c. 17. De Peccatorum Meritis, et Enchir. 81.

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ation is stronger than that grace, which God offers him; for if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity; it were no sin at all. This, therefore, must be certain to us; when the violence of our passions or desires overcomes our resolutions and fairer purposes, against the dictate of our reason, that indeed is a state of infirmity, but it is also of sin and death, a state of immortification; because the offices of grace are, to crucify the old man, that is, our former and impurer conversation, to subdue the petulancy of our passions, to reduce them to reason, and to restore empire and dominion to the superior faculties. So that this condition, in proper speaking, is not so good as the infirmity of grace, but it is no grace at all: for "whoever are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[r] those other imperfect, ineffective resolutions are but the first approaches of the kingdom of Christ, nothing but the claritics of lightning, dark as soon as light; and they therefore cannot be excuses to us, because the contrary weaknesses (as we call them) do not make the sin involuntary, but chosen and pursued, and, in true speaking, it is the strength of the lust, not the infirmity of a state of grace.

11. But yet there is a condition of grace, which is a state of little and imperfect ones, such as are called in Scripture "smoking flax and bruised reeds;" which is a state of the first dawning of the Sun of righteousness, when the lights of grace new rise upon our eyes; and then indeed they are weak, and have a more dangerous neighbourhood of temptations and desires, but they are not subdued by them:[s] they sin not by direct election; their actions criminal are but like the slime of Nilus, leaving rats half formed; they sin but seldom, and when they do, it is in small instances, and then also by surprise, by inadvertency; and then also they interrupt their own acts, and lessen them perpetually; and never do an act of sinfulness, but the principle is such, as makes it to be involuntary in many degrees. For when the understanding is clear, and the dictate of reason undisturbed and determinate, whatsoever then produces an irregular action excuses not, because the action is not made the less voluntary by it; for the action is not made involuntary from any other principle but from some defect of understanding, either in act, or habit, or faculty. For where there is no such defect, there is a full deliberation according to the capacity of the man, and then the act of election that follows is clear and full, and is that proper disposition, which makes him truly capable of punishment or reward respectively. Now although, in the first beginnings of grace, there is not a direct ignorance to excuse totally; yet because a sudden surprise or an inadvertency is not always in our power to prevent, these things do lessen the election and freedom of the action: and then, because they are but seldom, and never proceed to any length of time, or any great instances of crime, and are every day made still more infrequent, because grace growing stronger, the observation and advertency of the spirit, and the attendance of the inner man, grows more effectual and busy; this is a state of the imperfection of grace, but a state of grace it is. And it is more commonly observed to be expressed in the imperfection of our good actions, than in the irregularity of bad actions: and in this sense are those words of our blessed Saviour, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak;" which in this instance was not expressed in sin, but in a natural imperfection, which then was a recession from a civility, a not watching with the Lord. And this is the only infirmity that can consist with the state of grace.

12. So that now we may lay what load we please upon our nature, and call our violent and mortified desires by the name of an imperfect grace; but then we are dangerously mistaken, and flatter ourselves into an opinion of piety, when we are "in the gall of bitterness;" so making our misery the more certain and irremediable, because we think it needs nothing but a perpetuity and perseverance to bring us to heaven. The violence of passion and desires is a misery of nature, but a perfect principle of sin; multiplying and repeating the acts, but not lessening the malignity; but sins of infirmity, when we mean sins of a less and lower malice, are sins of a less and imperfect choice, because of the unavoidable imperfection of the understanding. Sins of infirmity are always infirm sins, that is, weak and imperfect in their principle, and in their nature, and in their design; that is, they are actions incomplete in all their capacities; but then passions and periodical inclinations consisting with a regular, and determined, and actual understanding, must never be their principal; for whatsoever proceeds thence, is destructive of spiritual life, and inconsistent with the state of grace. But sins of infirmity, when they pretend to a less degree of malignity, and a greater degree of excuse, are such as are little more than sins of pure and inculpable ignorance; for in that degree, in which any other principle is mixed with them, in the same degree they are criminal and inexcusable. For as a sin of infirmity is pretended to be little in its value and malignity, so it is certain, if it be great in the instance, it is not a sin of infirmity, that is, it is a state or act of death, and absolutely inconsistent with the state of grace.

13. Secondly: Another principle of temptation, pregnant with sin, and fruitful of monsters, is a weaker pretence, which less wary and credulous persons abuse themselves withal, pretending as a ground for their confidence and incorrigible pursuance of their courses, that they have a good meaning, that they intend sometimes well, and sometimes not ill; and this shall be sufficient to sanctify their actions, and to hallow their sin. And this is of worse malice, when religion is the colour for a war, and the preservation of faith made the warrant for destruction of charity, and a zeal for God made the false light to lead us to disobedience to man, and hatred of idolatry is the usher of sacrilege, and the defiance of superstition the introducer of profaneness, and reformation made the colour for a schism, and liberty of conscience the way to a bold and saucy heresy: for the end may indeed

[r] Gal. v. 24.

[s] S. August lib. de Gratia et liber Arbit. c. 17, et c. 29.

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hallow an indifferent action, but can never make straight a crooked and irregular. It was not enough for Saul to cry "for God and the sacrifice," that he spared the fat flocks of Amalek: and it would be a strange zeal and forwardness, that rather than the altar of incense should not smoke, will burn assafœtida, or the marrow of a man's bones. For as God will be honoured by us, so also in ways of his own appointment: for we are the makers of our religion, if we, in our zeal for God, do what he hath forbidden us.[t] And every sin, committed for religion, is just such a violence done to it as it seeks to prevent or remedy.

14. And so it is, if it be committed for an end or pretence of charity as well as of religion. We must be curious, that no pretence engage us upon an action, that is certainly criminal in its own nature. Charity may sometimes require our lives, but no obligation can endear a damnation to us; we are not bound to the choice of an eternal ruin, to save another. Indeed so far as an option will go, it may concern the excrescences of piety to choose, by a tacit or express act of volition, "to become anathema for our brethren,"[u] that is, by putting a case and fiction of law, to suppose it better, and wish it rather, that I should perish than my nation. Thus far is charitable, because it is innocent; for as it is great love to our country, so it is no uncharitableness to ourselves: for such options always are ineffective, and produce nothing but rewards of charity, and a greater glory. And the holy Jesus himself, who only could be, and was, effectively accursed to save us, got by it an exceeding and mighty glorification; and St. Paul did himself advantage by his charitable devotion for his countrymen. But since God never puts the question to us, that either we or our nation must be damned, he having fixed every man's final condition upon his own actions, in the virtue and obedience of Christ, if we mistake the expresses of charity, and suffer ourselves to be damned indeed for God's glory, or our brethren's good, we spoil the duty, and ruin ourselves, when our option comes to act. But it is observable, that although religion is often pretended to justify a sin, yet charity is but seldom; which makes it full of suspicion, that religion is but the cover to the death's head, and at the best is but an accusing of God, that he is not willing or not able to preserve religion, without our irregular and impious co-operations. But however, though it might concern us to wish ourselves rather accursed than our religion, or our prince, or our country should perish, (for I find no instances, that it is lawful so much as to wish it for the preservation of a single friend,) yet it is against charity to bring such a wish to pass, and, by sin to damn ourselves really for a good end, either of religion or charity.

15. Let us, therefore, serve God, as he hath described the way; for all our accesses to him, being acts of his free concession and grace, must be by his own designation and appointment. We might as well have chosen what shape our bodies should be of, as of what instances the substance of our religion should consist.

[t] Vide Historia Uzzæ, 2 Sam. vi. 6–9.

16. Thirdly: A third principle of temptation is, an opinion of prosecuting actions of civility, compliance, and society, to the luxation of a point of piety and stricter duty: and good natures, persons of humane and sweeter dispositions, are too apt to dash upon this rock of offence. But the evil that I would note is, that there are some conditions of men, to whom a vice is so accustomed, that he that mingles with them must handle the crime and touch the venom. There are some vices which are national; there are some that are points of honour; some are civilities of entertainment; and they are therefore accounted unavoidable, because the understandings of men are degenerous as their manners, and it is accounted sottish and fantastical not to communicate in their accustomed loosenesses. Amongst some men all their first addresses are drinkings, their entertainments intemperate beyond the permissions of christian austerity: their drink is humorous, and their humours quarrelous; and it is dishonourable not to engage in duel, and venture your soul to ascertain an empty reputation. These inconveniences rely upon false opinions and vain fancies, having no greater foundation than the sottish discourses of ignorant and ungodly persons; and they have no peculiar and appropriate remedy, but a resolute severity of manners, and a consideration what is required of us as christians, to confront against those fonder customs and expectations from us, as we engage in the puddles of the world, and are blended in society.

17. To which purposes we must be careful not to engage too freely in looser company, never without business or unavoidable accidents; and when we mingle in affairs, it will concern our safety to watch, lest multitude of talk, goodness, and facility of nature, the delight of company, and the freedom and ill-customed civilities do, by degrees, draw us away from our guards and retirement of spirit. For in these cases, every degree of dissolution disarms us of our strengths: and if we give way so far as we think it tolerable, we instantly and undiscernibly pass into unlawful and criminal. But our best defences are deposited in a severe and prudent understanding, and discerning the sottishness of such principles, which represent vice in civil language, and propound a crime to you under the cover of kindness; which is just so much recompence, as it is satisfaction to a condemned person, that he was accused by a witty orator, and sentenced by an eloquent judge. Remember always, that "the friendships of the world are enmity with God;" and that those societies, which are combined by relations of drink, and wantonness, and impertinence, and crimes, are either inconsiderable in civility, or reason, or reputation; no wise man is moved by their testimony or discourses; and they are so impotent, rude, and undiscerning a theatre, that most commonly he is the best man, who from thence is the worst reported and represented.

18. But in all the instances of this great evil, the very stating the question right is above half the victory. For it is a question between mistaken

[u] Rom. ix. 3.

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civility and certain duty; piety on one side, and the disguises of humanity on the other. God and man are the parties interested; and to counterpoise the influence of the sight and face of man, (which being in a visible communication, it is not in some natures to neglect or contradict,) there are all the excellencies of God, the effects of his power, his certain presence and omniscience, the severities of his judgment, and the sweetness and invitation of his mercies; besides the prudence, wisdom, and satisfaction to the spirit, when we wisely neglect such sottish and low abuses and temptations, to conform to the rules of reason and duty, in compliance with the purposes of God and our own felicities.

19. These ill-managed principles are dangers as universal as an infected air; yet there are some diseases more proper to the particular state of religion. First, to young beginners in religion he represents the difficulties of religion, and propounds the greater examples of holy persons, and affrights them with those mountains of piety; observing where, and upon what instance of severity, his fancy will be most apprehensive and afflicted: and this he fails not often to represent, with a purpose, that by believing no piety less than the greatest can be good, he may despair of those heights, and retire into the securities and indifferences of a careless life. But this is to be cured by all those instruments of piety, which in special are incentives of the love of God, and endearments of spiritual and religious affections; and particularly by consideration of the Divine goodness, "who knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust," and will require no more of us than according to our powers and present capacities. But the subject-matter of this temptation is considered and refuted in the discourse of the love of God.[x]

20. But most commonly, young beginners are zealous and high, and not so easily tempted to a recession, till after a long time, by a revolution of affections, they are abated by a defervescency in holy actions. The devil uses to prompt them on; not that he loves the piety and the progress, but that he would engage the person in imprudences, and such forwardness of expresses, which either are in their own nature indiscretions, or from which, by reason of the incapacity of the person, it is necessary for him to retire. A new convert is like a bird newly entered into a net, through which possibly she might pass without danger, if her fears and unreasonable strivings did not entangle her; but when, by busy and disturbed flutterings, she discomposes the order of it, she is entangled and unpenned, and made a prey to her treacherous enemy. Such are the indiscreet strivings, and too forward enterprises of new penitents; whom we shall observe too often undertaking great austerities, making vows, and casting bands upon their liberty, and snares upon their persons; thinking nothing great enough to expiate their sin, or to present to God, or to endear their services, or secure their perseverance; and therefore they lay a load of fetters upon themselves, or rather cut off their legs, that they may never go back; therefore laying an obligation of vows and intolerable burdens on themselves, that by these they may, by a compendium of piety, redeem the time, and by those make it impossible to prevaricate. But the observation of the sad events and final accidents of these men, hath given probation of the indiscretion of such furious addresses and beginnings. And it was prudently done of Meletius[y] of Antioch, when he visited the diocesses of Syria, and the several religious persons famous for severe undertakings: espying that Simeon Stylites dwelt upon a pillar, and had bound his leg with a strong chain of iron, he sent for a smith, causing it to be knocked off, and said, "To a man that loves God, his mind is a sufficient chain." For the loads of voluntary austerities, rashly undertaken, make religion a burden, when their first heats expire; and their vows, which are intended to secure the practice and perpetuate the piety, are but the occasions of an aggravate crime; and the vow does not secure the piety, but the weariness and satiety of the duty tempts to the breaking of the vow, or at least makes the man impatient, when he cannot persist with content, nor retire with safety.

21. It therefore concerns all spiritual guides, to manage their new converts with sober counsels and moderate permissions, knowing that sublime speculations in the metaphysics are not fit entertainment for an infant understanding. There is "milk for babes, and strong meat for men" of riper piety; and it will employ all the regular strength of young beginners to contest against the relics of those mischiefs, which remain since the expulsion of the old man, and to master those difficulties, which, by the nature of the state, are certainly consequent to so late mutation. And if we, by the furies of zeal and the impatience of mistaken piety, are violent and indiscreet in the destroying of our enemies, we probably may tread the thistle down, and trample upon all its appearances, and yet leave the root in the ground, with haste and imprudent forwardness. Gentle and soft counsels are the surest enemies to your vice, and the best conservators and promoters of a virtuous state: but a hasty charge, and the conduct of a young leader, may engage an early spirit in dangers and dishonours. And this temptation is of so much greater danger, because it hath a face of zeal, and meets with all encouragements from without; every man being apt to cherish a convert, and to inflame his new fires; but few consider the inconveniences that are consequent to indiscreet beginnings, and the worse events usually appendant to such inconveniences.

22. Indeed it is not usual, that prudence and a new-kindled zeal meet in the same person: but it will therefore concern the safety of new converts, who cannot guide themselves, to give themselves up to the conduct of an experienced spiritual person, who being disinterested in those heats of the first

[x] Part 2. in Explicat. of the Decalogue, 1 Com.

[y] Theod. lib. v. c. 4.

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apprehensions, and being long taught by the observation of the accidents of a spiritual life, upon what rocks rashness and zeal usually do engage us, can best tell, what degrees and what instances of religion they may, with most safety, undertake: but for the general, it is best in the addresses of grace to follow the course of nature; let there be an infancy, and a childhood, and a vigorous youth; and by the divers and distant degrees of increment, let the persons be established in wisdom and grace. But above all things, let them be careful, that they do not lay upon themselves necessities of any lasting course, no vows of perpetuity in any instance of uncommanded action or degree of religion: for he may alter in his capacity and exterior condition; he may see by experience, that the particular engagement is imprudent; he may, by the virtue of obedience, be engaged on a duty inconsistent with the conveniences and advantages of the other; and his very loss of liberty in an uncommanded instance, may tempt him to inconvenience. But then, for the single and transient actions of piety, although in them the danger is less, even though the imprudence be great, yet it were well, if new beginners in religion would attempt a moderate and an even piety, rather than actions of eminence, lest they retire with shame, and be afflicted with scruple, when their first heats are spent, and expire in weariness and temptation. It is good to keep within the circuits of a man's affections, not stretching out all the degrees of fancy and desire, but leaving the appetites of religion rather unsatisfied, and still desiring more, than by stretching out the whole faculty, leave no desires but what are fulfilled and wearied.

23. Thirdly: I shall not need here to observe such temptations, which are direct invitations to sin, upon occasion of the piety of holy persons; such as are security, too much confidence, pride, and vanity: these are part of every man's danger, and are to be considered upon their several arguments. Here I was only to note the general instruments of mischief. It remains now, that I speak of such remedies and general antidotes, not which are proportioned to sins in special, but such as are preventions, or remedies, and good advices in general.

24. First: Let every man abstain from all occasions of sin, as much as his condition will permit. And it were better to do some violence to our secular affairs, than to procure apparent or probable danger to our souls. For if we see not a way open and ready prepared to our iniquity, our desires oftentimes are not willing to be troubled, but opportunity gives life and activeness to our appetites. If David had not from his towers beheld the private beauties of Bathsheba, Uriah had lived, and his wife been unattempted; but sin was brought to him by that chance, and entering at the casement of his eyes, set his heart on fire, and despoiled him of his robes of honour and innocence. The riches of the wedge of gold, and the beauty of the Babylonish garment, made Achan sacrilegious upon the place, who was innocent enough in his preceding purposes: and therefore that soul, that makes itself an object to sin, and invites an enemy to view its possessions, and live in the vicinage, loves the sin itself; and he that is pleased with the danger, would willingly be betrayed into the necessity and the pleasure of the sin: for he can have no other end to entertain the hazards, but that he hath a farther purpose to serve upon them; he loves the pleasure of the sin, and therefore he would make the condition of sinning certain and unavoidable. And therefore holy Scripture, which is admirable and curious in the cautions and securities of virtue, does not determine its precepts in the precise commands of virtuous actions, but also binds up our senses, obstructs the passage of temptation, blocks up all the ways and avenues of vice, commanding us "to make a covenant with our eyes; not to look upon a maid; not to sit with a woman that is a singer; not to consider the wine when it sparkles, and gives its colour rightly in the cup:" but "to set a watch before our mouths, to keep the door of our lips;" and many more instances to this purpose, that sin may not come so near as to be repulsed; as knowing sin hath then prevailed too far, when we give the denial to its solicitations.

25. We read a story of a virtuous lady, that desired of St. Athanasius to procure for her, out of the number of the widows fed from the ecclesiastical corban, an old woman, morose, peevish, and impatient; that she might, by the society of so ungentle a person, have often occasion to exercise her patience, her forgiveness, and charity. I know not how well the counsel succeeded with her; I am sure it was not very safe: and to invite the trouble, to triumph over it, is to wage a war of an uncertain issue; for no end but to get the pleasures of the victory, which oftentimes do not pay for the trouble, never for the danger. An Egyptian, who acknowledged fire for his god, one day doing his devotions, kissed his god after the manner of worshippers, and burnt his lips. It was not in the power of that false and imaginary deity to cure the real hurt he had done to his devoutest worshipper. Just such a fool is he, that kisses a danger, though with a design of virtue, and hugs an opportunity of sin for an advantage of piety; he burns himself in the neighbourhood of the flame, and twenty to one but he may perish in its embraces. And he that looks out a danger, that he may overcome it, does as did the Persian, who worshipping the sun, looked upon him, when he prayed him to cure his sore eyes. The sun may as well cure a weak eye, or a great burden knit a broken arm, as a danger can do him advantage, that seeks such a combat which may ruin him, and after which he rarely may have this reward, that it may be said of him, he had the good fortune not to perish in his folly. It is easier to prevent a mischief than to cure it; and besides the pain of the wound, it is infinitely more full of difficulty to cure a broken leg, which a little care and observation would have preserved whole. To recover from a sin is none of the easiest labours, that concern the sons of men; and therefore it concerns them rather not to enter into such a narrow strait, from which they can never draw back their head, without leaving their hair and skin and their

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ears behind. If God please to try us, he means us no hurt, and he does it with great reason and great mercy; but if we go to try ourselves, we may mean well, but not wisely: for as it is simply unlawful for weak persons to seek a temptation, so for the more perfect it is dangerous. We have enemies enough without, and one of our own within:[z] but we become our own tempter, when we run out to meet the world, or invite the devil home, that we may throw holy water upon his flames, and call the danger nearer, that we may run from it.[a] And certainly men are more guilty of many of their temptations than the devil, through their incuriousness or rashness doing as much mischief to themselves as he can: for he can but offer; and so much we do, when we run into danger. Such were those stories of St. Antony provoking the devil to battle. If the stories had been as true as the actions were rash and ridiculous, the story had fastened a note of indiscretion upon that good man; though now I think, there is nothing but a mark of fiction and falsehood on the writer.

26. Secondly: Possibly without fault we may be engaged in a temptation, but then we must be diligent to resist the first beginnings: for when our strength is yet entire and unabated, if we suffer ourselves to be overcome, and consent to its first and weakest attempts, how shall we be able to resist, when it hath tired our contestation, and wearied our patience, when we are weaker and prevailed upon, and the temptation is stronger and triumphant in many degrees of victory? By how much a hectic fever is harder to be cured than a tertian, or a consumption of the lungs than a little distillation of rheum upon the throat; by so much is it harder to prevail upon a triumphing lust than upon its first insinuations. But the ways of resisting are of a different consideration, proportionably to the nature of the crimes.

27. First: If the temptation be to crimes of pleasure and sensuality, let the resistance be by flight:[b] for, in case of lust, even to consider the arguments against it is half as great temptation, as to press the arguments for it; for all considerations of such allurements make the soul perceive something of its relish, and entertain the fancy. Even the pulling pitch from our clothes defiles the fingers; and some adherences of pleasant and carnal sins will be remanent even from those considerations, which stay within the circuit of the flames, though but with purpose to quench the fire, and preserve the house. Chastity cannot suffer the least thought of the reproaches of the spirit of impurity: and it is necessary to all that will keep their purity and innocence against sensual temptations, to avoid every thing that may prejudice decorum. Libanius the sophist reports, that a painter being one day desirous to paint Apollo upon a laurel-board, the colours would not stick, but were rejected; out of which his fancy found out this extraction: that the chaste Daphne (concerning whom the poets feign, that, flying from Apollo, who attempted to ravish her, she was turned into a laurel-tree) could not endure him even in painting,[c] and rejected him after the loss of her sensitive powers. And indeed chaste souls do, even to death, resent the least image and offer of impurity: whatsoever is like a sin of uncleanness, he that means to preserve himself chaste, must avoid, as he would avoid the sin; in this case there being no difference but of degrees between the inward temptation and the crime.

28. Secondly: If the temptation be to crimes of troublesome and preternatural desires, or intellectual nature, let the resistance be made consertâ manu, by a perfect fight, by the amassing of such arguments in general, and remedies in particular, which are apt to become deleteries to the sin, and to abate the temptation. But, in both these instances, the resistance must at least be as soon as the attempt is, lest the violence of the temptation outrun our powers: for if, against our full strength, it hath prevailed to the first degrees, its progress to a complete victory is not so improbable, as were its successes at the first beginnings. But to serve this, and all other ends, in the resisting and subduing a temptation, these following considerations have the best and most universal influence.

39. First: "Consideration of the presence of God," who is witness of all our actions, and a revenger of all impiety. This is so great an instrument of fear and religion, that whoever does actually consider God to be present, and considers what the first consideration signifies, either must be restrained from the present temptation or must have thrown off all the possibilities and aptnesses of virtue; such as are modesty, and reverence, and holy fear. For if the face of a man scatters all base machinations, and we dare not act our crimes in the theatre, unless we be impudent as well as criminal; much more does the sense of a present Deity fill the places of our heart with veneration and the awe of religion, when it is thoroughly apprehended and actually considered. We see not God, "he is not in our thoughts," when we run into darkness to act our impurities. For we dare not commit adultery if a boy be present; behold, the boy is sent off with an excuse, and God abides there, but yet we commit the crime: it is because, as Jacob said at Bethel, "God was in that place, and we knew not of it;" and yet we neither breathe, nor move an artery, but in him, and by his assistance: "In him we live, and move, and have our being."[d] And, "All things are naked and open in his sight."[e] "The iniquity of my people is very great; for they say, The Lord seeth not."[f] "Shall not he that made the eye, see?"[g] "To him the night and day are both alike."[h]

[z] Sed quid ego omne malum mundique hominumque maligni
Hostis ad invidiam detorqueo? quum mala nostra
Ex nostris concreta animis, genus, et caput, et vim,
Quid sint, quid valeant, sumunt de corde parente.
PRUD. Hamartig.

[a] Ecclus. xxi. 27. Quum exsecratur impius Satanam, suam ipsius animam exsecratur.

[b] Time videre unde possis cadere; noli fieri perversâ simplicitate securus.—S. AUG.

[c] Καὶ ἀρνεῖται τον ἔρωτα, κἂν τὸ δένδρον.

[d] Acts xvii. 28. [e] Heb. iv. 13.
[f] Ezek. ix. 9. Jer. xxiii. 24. [g] Psalm xciv. 9.
[h] Psalm cxxxix. 12.

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These, and many more to the same design, are the voices of Scripture, that our spirits may retire into the beholding of God, to the purposes of fear and holiness, with whom we do cohabit by the necessities of nature, and the condition of our essence, wholly in dependence; and then only we may sin securely, when we can contrive to do it so, that God may not see us.

30. There are many men who are "servants of the eyes,"[i] as the apostle's phrase is; who, when they are looked on, act virtue with much pompousness and theatrical bravery:[k] but these men, when the theatre is empty, put off their upper garment, and retire into their primitive baseness. Diogenes endured the extremity of winter's cold, that the people might wonder at his austerity and philosophical patience; but Plato, seeing the people admiring the man and pitying the sufferance, told them, that the way to make him warm himself, was for them to be gone, and to take no notice of him. For they that walk as in the sight of men, serve that design well enough, when they fill the public voice with noises and opinions, and are not, by their purposes, engaged to act in private; but they who are servants of the eyes of God, and walk as in the Divine presence, perceive the same restraints in darkness, and closets, and grots, as in the light and midst of theatres; and that consideration imposes upon us a happy necessity of doing virtuously, which presents us placed in the eyes of our Judge. And, therefore, it was not unhandsomely said of a Jewish doctor, "If every man would consider God to be the great eye of the world, watching perpetually over all our actions, and that his hand is indefatigable, and his ear ever open, possibly sin might be extirpated from off the face of the earth." And this is the condition of beatitude; and the blessed souls within their regions of light and felicity cannot sin, because of the vision beatifical, they always behold the face of God: and those who partake of this state by way of consideration, which is essential to the condition of the blessed, and derive it into practice and discourse, in proportion to this shall retain an innocence and a part of glory.

31. For it is a great declension of human reason, and a disreputation to our spirits, that we are so wholly led by sense, that we will not walk in the regions of the Spirit, and behold God by our eyes of faith and discourse, suffering our course of life to be guided by such principles, which distinguish our natures from beasts, and our conditions from vicious, and our spirits from the world, and our hopes from the common satisfactions of sense and corruption. The better half of our nature is of the same constitution with that of angels: and therefore, although we are drenched in matter and the communications of earth, yet our better part was designed to converse with God: and we had, besides the eye of reason, another eye of faith put into our souls, and both clarified with revelations and demonstrations of the Spirit, expressing to us so visible and clear characters of God's presence, that the expression of the same Spirit is, "We may feel him, for he is within us,"[l] and about us, and we are in him, and in the comprehensions of his embracings, as birds in the air, or infants in the wombs of their pregnant mothers. And that God is pleased not to communicate himself to the eyes of our body, but still to remain invisible, besides that it is his own glory and perfection, it is also no more to us but like a retreat behind a curtain, where, when we know our Judge stands as an espial and a watch over our actions, we shall be sottish, if we dare to provoke his jealousy, because we see him not, when we know that he is close by, though behind the cloud.

32. There are some general impressions upon our spirits, which, by way of presumption and custom, possess our persuasions, and make restraint upon us to excellent purposes; such as are the religion of holy places, reverence of our parents, presence of an austere, an honourable, or a virtuous person.[m] For many sins are prevented by the company of a witness, especially if, besides the ties of modesty, we have also towards him an endearment of reverence and fair opinion;[n] and if he were with us in our privacies, he would cause our retirements to be more holy. St. Ambrose reports of the Virgin Mary, that she had so much piety and religion in her countenance and deportment, that divers persons, moved by the veneration and regard of her person, in her presence have first commenced their resolutions of chastity and sober living. However the story be, her person certainly was of so express and great devotion and sanctity, that he must needs have been of a very impudent disposition, and firm immodesty, who durst have spoken unhandsome language in the presence of so rare a person. And why then any rudeness in the presence of God, if that were as certainly believed and considered? For whatsoever amongst men can be a restraint of vice or an endearment of virtue, all this is highly verified in the presence of God, to whom our conscience, in its very concealments, is as a fair table written in capital letters by his own finger; and then, if we fail of the advantage of this exercise, it must proceed either from our dishonourable opinion of God, or our own fearless inadvertency, or from a direct spirit of reprobation: for it is certain, that this consideration is, in its own nature, apt to correct our manners, to

[i] Ephes. vi. 6. Ὀφθαλμόδουλοι.

[k] Non enim virtute ac studiis, ut haberentur philosophi, laborabant; sed vultum et tristitiam, et dissentientem à cæteris habitum, pessimis moribus prætendebant.—QUINTIL. lib. i. procem.

Ambitio et luxuria et impotentia scenam desiderant; sanabis ista, si absconderis.—SENEC. ep. 15.

Magna vobis, si dissimulare non vultis, injecta necessitas probitatis, cùm omnia agitis ante oculos judicis cuncta cernentis.—BOETH. lib. v. Consol. prosâ ult.

[l] Acts xvii. 27.

Πεπεισμένοι ὅτι ὁι θεοὶ
Ἥρα ἐσσάμενοι πάντη φοιτῶσιν ἐπ' αἶαν,
Ἀνθρώπων ὕβρεις τε καὶ εὐνομίας ἐφορῶντες.

[m] Aliquem habeat animus quem revereatur, cujus auctoritate etiam secretum tuum sanctius fiat. Quid prodest inclusam esse conscientiam? patemus Deo.—SENEC. lib. i. ep. 11.

[n] Tiberius inter bona malaque mixtus, incolumi matre; intestabilis sævitiâ, sed obtectis libidinibus, dum Sejanum dilexit timuitve: postremò in scelera simul ac dedecora prorupit, postquam, remoto pudore et metu, suo tantùm ingenio utebatur.—TACIT. lib. vi. c. 51.

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produce the fear of God,[o] and humility, and spiritual and holy thoughts, and the knowledge of God and of ourselves, and the consequents of all these, holy walking, and holy comforts. And, by this only argument, St. Paphnutius and St. Ephrem are reported in church story to have converted two harlots from a course of dissolution to great sanctity and austerity.

33. But then this presence of God must not be a mere speculation of the understanding; though so only it is of very great benefit and immediate efficacy, yet it must reflect as well from the will as from discourse: and then only we walk in the presence of God, when by faith we behold him present, when we speak to him in frequent and holy prayers, when we beg aid from him in all our needs, and ask counsel of him in all our doubts, and before him bewail our sins, and tremble at his presence. This is an entire exercise of religion. And beside that the presence of God serves to all this, it hath also especial influence in the disimprovement of temptations, because it hath in it many things contrariant to the nature and efficacy of temptations; such as are consideration, reverence, spiritual thoughts, and the fear of God: for wherever this consideration is actual, there either God is highly despised, or certainly feared. In this case we are made to declare; for our purposes are concealed only in an incuriousness and inconsideration; but whoever considers God as present, will, in all reason, be as religious as in a temple, the reverence of which place custom or religion hath imprinted in the spirits of most men: so that, as Ahasuerus said of Haman, "Will he ravish the queen in my own house?" aggravating the crime by the incivility of the circumstance; God may well say to us, whose religion compels us to believe God every where present; since the Divine presence hath made all places holy, and every place hath a Numen in it, even the eternal God, we unhallow the place, and desecrate the ground whereon we stand, supported by the arm of God, placed in his heart, and enlightened by his eye, when we sin in so sacred a presence.

34. The second great instrument against temptation, is "meditation of death."[p] Raderus reports, that a certain virgin, to restrain the inordination of intemperate desires, which were like thorns in her flesh, and disturbed her spiritual peace, shut herself up in a sepulchre, and for twelve years dwelt in that scene of death. It were good we did so too, making tombs and coffins presential to us by frequent meditation. For God hath given us all a definitive arrest in Adam, and from it there lies no appeal; but it is infallibly and unalterably "appointed for all men once to die,"[q] or to "be changed," to pass from hence to a condition of eternity, good or bad. Now, because this law is certain,[r] and the time and the manner of its execution is uncertain, and from this moment eternity depends, and that after this life the final sentence is irrevocable, that all the pleasures here are sudden, transient, and unsatisfying, and vain; he must needs be a fool, that knows not to distinguish moments from eternity:[s] and since it is a condition of necessity, established by Divine decrees, and fixed by the indispensable laws of nature, that we shall, after a very little duration, pass on to a condition strange, not understood, then unalterable, and yet of great mutation from this, even of greater distance from that in which we are here, than this is from the state of beasts; this, when it is considered, must, in all reason, make the same impression upon our understandings and affections, which naturally all strange things, and all great considerations, are apt to do; that is, create resolutions and results passing through the heart of man, such as are reasonable and prudent, in order to our own felicities, that we neglect the vanities of the present temptation, and secure our future condition, which will, till eternity itself expires, remain such as we make it to be by our deportment in this short transition and passage through the world.

35. And that this discourse is reasonable, I am therefore confirmed, because I find it to be to the same purpose used by the Spirit of God, and the wisest personages in the world. "My soul is always in my hand, therefore do I keep thy commandments,"[t] said David: he looked upon himself as a dying person, and that restrained all his inordinations, and so he prayed, "Lord, teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom."[u] And therefore the Egyptians used to serve up a skeleton to their feasts, that the dissolutions and vapours of wine might be restrained with that bunch of myrrh, and the vanities of their eyes chastised by that sad object: for they thought it unlikely a man should be transported far with any thing low or vicious,[x] that looked long and often into the hollow eye-pits of a death's head, or dwelt in a charnel-house. And such considerations make all the importunity and violence of sensual desires to disband. For when a man stands perpetually at the door of eternity, and, as did John the almoner, every day is building of his sepulchre, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care, that the door leading to hell do not open upon us, that we be not crushed to ruin by the stones of our grave, and that

[o] Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο, πλὴν
Εἴδωλ' ὅσοιπερ ζῶμεν, ἢ κούφην σκιάν.
Τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν, ὑπέρκοπον
Μηδέν ποτ' εἴπῃς αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος.
SOPHOCL. Aj. 125.

[p] Tota philosophia nihil est nisi meditatio mortis. PLATO.

[q] Μόνος θεῶν γὰρ Θάνατος οὐ δώρων ἑρᾷ. Οὐδ' ἂν τε θύων, οὔτ' ἐπισπένδων νασῖτ.—ÆSCHYL.
Ἀθανασίας δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδ' ἂν συναγάγῃς Τὰ Ταντάλου τάλαντ' ἐκεῖνα λεγόμενα.—MENAND.
Vita humana propè uti ferrum est: si exerceas, conteritur; si non exerceas, tamen rubigo interficit.—CATO apud A. Gell. lib. xi. c. 2.

[r] Πρὸς μὲν τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἀσφάλειάν ἐστε προϊστασθαι· χάριν δὲ θανάτου, πάντες ἄνθρωποι ἀτείχιστον πόλιν οἰκοῦμεν.—METRODOR. PHIL.

[s] Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est. Per hoc spatium, quod ab infantiâ patet in senectutem, in aliam naturæ sumimur partem.—SENEC. Ep. 102.

[t] Psalm cxix. 109. [u] Psalm xc. 12.

[x] Θάνατος πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔστω σοι καθ' ἡμέραν, καὶ οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὐδὲ ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός. —EPICT. Enchir. cap. 28.

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our death become not a consignation to us to a sad eternity. For all the pleasures of the whole world,[y] and in all its duration, cannot make recompence for one hour's torment in hell: and yet if wicked persons were to sit in hell for ever without any change of posture or variety of torment beyond that session, it were insufferable beyond the endurance of nature: and therefore, where little less than infinite misery in an infinite duration shall punish the pleasures of sudden and transient crimes, the gain of pleasure, and the exchange of banks here for a condition of eternal and miserable death, is a permutation fit to be made by none but fools and desperate persons, who made no use of a reasonable soul, but that they, in their perishing, might be convinced of unreasonableness, and die by their own fault.

36. The use that wise men have made, when they reduced this consideration to practice, is, to believe every day to be the last of their life, for so it may be, and, for aught we know, it will; and then think what you would avoid, or what you would do, if you were dying, or were to-day to suffer death by sentence and conviction; and that, in all reason, and in proportion to the strength of your consideration, you will do every day. For "that is the sublimity of wisdom, to do those things living, which are to be desired and chosen by dying persons."[z] An alarm of death, every day renewed, and pressed earnestly, will watch a man so tame and soft, that the precepts of religion will dwell deep in his spirit. But they "that make a covenant with the grave, and put the evil day far from them," they are the men that eat spiders and toads for meat greedily, and a temptation to them is as welcome as joy, and they seldom dispute the point in behalf of piety or mortification: for they that look upon death at a distance, apprehend it not, but in such general lines and great representments that describe it only as future and possible, but nothing of its terrors or affrightments, or circumstances of advantage, are discernible by such an eye, that disturbs its sight, and discomposes the posture, that the object may seem another thing than what it is truly and really. St. Austin, with his mother Monica, was led one day by a Roman prætor to see the tomb of Cæsar. Himself thus describes the corpse. "It looked of a blue mould, the bone of the nose laid bare, the flesh of the nether lip quite fallen off, his mouth full of worms, and in his eye-pits two hungry toads feasting upon the remanent portion of flesh and moisture; and so he dwelt in his house of darkness."[a] And if every person, tempted by an opportunity of lust or intemperance, would choose such a room for his privacy, that company for his witness, that object to allay his appetite, he would soon find his spirit more sober, and his desires obedient.[b] I end this with the counsel of St. Bernard, "Let every man, in the first address to his actions, consider, whether, if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act, and whether he would not be infinitely troubled, that death should surprise him in the present dispositions; and then let him proceed accordingly." For, since "our treasure is in earthen vessels," which may be broken in pieces by the collision of ten thousand accidents, it were not safe to treasure up wrath in them; for if we do, we shall certainly drink it in the day of recompence.

37. Thirdly: Before, and in, and after all this, the blessed Jesus propounds prayer as a remedy against temptations: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."[c] For, besides that prayer is the great instrument of obtaining victory by the grace of God, as a fruit of our desires, and of God's natural and essential goodness; the very praying against a temptation, if it be hearty, fervent, and devout, is a denying of it, and part of the victory: for it is a disclaiming the entertainment of it, it is a positive rejection of the crime; and every consent to it is a ceasing to pray, and to desire remedy. And we shall observe, that whensoever we begin to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, our prayers against it lessen as the consent increases; there being nothing a more direct enemy to the temptation than prayer, which, as it is of itself a professed hostility against the crime, so it is a calling in auxiliaries from above to make the victory more certain. If temptation sets upon thee, do thou set upon God; for he is as soon overcome as thou art, as soon moved to good as thou art to evil; he is as quickly invited to pity thee as thou art to ask him;[d] provided thou dost not finally rest in the petition, but pass into action, and endeavour, by all means human and moral, to quench the flame newly kindled in thy bowels, before it come to devour the marrow of the bones. For a strong prayer, and a lazy, incurious, unobservant walking, are contradictions in the discourses of religion. Ruffinus[e] tells us a story of a young man solicited by the spirit of uncleanness, who came to an old religious person, and begged his prayers. It was in that age, when God used to answer prayers of very holy persons by more clear and familiar significations of his pleasure, than he knows now to be necessary. But after many earnest prayers sent up to the throne of grace, and the young man not at all bettered, upon consideration and inquiry of particulars he found the cause to be, because the young man relied so upon the prayers of the old eremite, that he did nothing at all to discountenance his lust, or contradict the temptation. But then he took another

[y] Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, præter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.
HOR. lib. ii. od. 14.

[z] Hic est apex summæ sapientiæ, ea viventem facere, quæ morienti essent appetenda.

[a] Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ σποδός εἰμι,
Νίνου μεγάλης βασιλεύσας.
In Epitaph. Sardinapali.

[b] Ἡβῶσι, φίλε θυμέ· τάχ' ἄν τινες ἄλλοι ἔσοιντο Ἄνδρες, ἐγὼ δὲ θανὼν γαῖα μέλαιν' ἔσομαι.—Fragm. Theog. in Speculo Monach.

[c] Matt. xxvi. 41.

[d] ——Hic levare functum
Pauperem laboribus
Vocatus atque non vocatus audit.
HOR. lib. ii. od. 18.

[e] Lib. iii. 13.

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course, enjoined him austerities and exercises of devotion, gave him rules of prudence and caution, tied him to work and to stand upon his guard; and then the prayers returned in triumph, and the young man trampled upon his lust. And so shall I and you, by God's grace, if we pray earnestly and frequently, if we watch carefully that we be not surprised, if we be not idle in secret nor talkative in public, if we read Scriptures, and consult with a spiritual guide, and make religion to be our work, that serving of God be the business of our life, and our designs be to purchase eternity; then we shall walk safely, or recover speedily, and, by doing advantages to piety, secure a greatness of religion, and spirituality to our spirits and understanding. But remember, that when Israel fought against Amalek, Moses's prayer and Moses's hand secured the victory, his prayer grew ineffectual when his hands were slack; to remonstrate to us, that we must cooperate with the grace of God, praying devoutly, and watching carefully, and observing prudently, and labouring with diligence and assiduity.

THE PRAYER.

Eternal God and most merciful Father, I adore thy wisdom, providence, and admirable dispensation of affairs, in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus, that thou, who art infinitely good, dost permit so many sadnesses and dangers to discompose that order of things and spirits, which thou didst create innocent and harmless, and dost design to great and spiritual perfections; that the emanation of good from evil, by thy overruling power and excellencies, may force glory to thee from our shame, and honour to thy wisdom by these contradictory accidents and events. Lord, have pity upon me in these sad disorders, and with mercy know my infirmities. Let me, by suffering what thou pleasest, co-operate to the glorification of thy grace and magnifying thy mercy; but never let me consent to sin, but, with the power of thy majesty, and mightiness of thy prevailing mercy, rescue me from those throngs of dangers and enemies, which daily seek to deflower that innocence, with which thou didst clothe my soul in the new birth. Behold, O God, how all the spirits of darkness endeavour the extinction of our hopes, and the dispersion of all those graces, and the prevention of all those glories, which the holy Jesus hath purchased for every loving and obedient soul. Our very meat and drink are full of poison, our senses are snares, our business is various temptation, our sins are inlets to more, and our actions made occasions of sins. Lord, deliver me from the malice of the devil, from the fallacies of the world, from my own folly; that I be not devoured by the first, nor cheated by the second, nor betrayed by myself: but let thy grace, which is sufficient for me, be always present with me; let thy Spirit instruct me in the spiritual warfare, arming my understanding, and securing my will, and fortifying my spirit with resolutions of piety, and incentives of religion, and deleteries of sin; that the dangers I am encompassed withal, may become unto me an occasion of victory and triumph, through the aids of the Holy Ghost, and by the cross of the Lord Jesus, who hath, for himself and all his servants, triumphed over sin, and hell, and the grave, even all the powers of darkness, from which, by the mercies of Jesus, and the merits of his passion, now and ever, deliver me, and all thy faithful people. Amen.

DISCOURSE VI.

Of Baptism.

PART I.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus was to begin his prophetical office, and to lay the foundation of his church on the corner-stone, he first tempered the cement with water, and then with blood, and afterwards built it up by the hands of the Spirit: himself entered at that door, by which his disciples for ever after were to follow him; for therefore he went in at the door of baptism, that he might hallow the entrance, which himself made to the house he was now building.

2. As it was in the old, so it is in the new creation; out of the waters God produced every living creature: and when at first "the Spirit moved upon the waters," and gave life, it was the type of what was designed in the renovation. Every thing that lives now, "is born of water and the Spirit;" and Christ, who is our Creator and Redeemer in the new birth, opened the fountains, and hallowed the stream: Christ, who is our Life, went down into the waters of baptism; and we, who descend thither, find the effects of life; it is living water, of which whoso drinks needs not to drink of it again, for "it shall be in him a well of water, springing up to life eternal."[a]

3. But because every thing is resolved into the same principles from whence it was taken, the old world, which by the power of God came from the waters, by their own sin fell into the waters again, and were all drowned, and only eight persons were saved by an ark: and the world renewed upon the stock and reserves of that mercy consigned the sacrament of baptism in another figure; for then God gave his sign from heaven, that by water the world should never again perish; but he meant that they should be saved by water: for "baptism, which is a figure like to this, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."[b]

4. After this, the Jews report that the world took up the doctrine of baptisms, in remembrance that the iniquity of the old world was purged by water; and they washed all that came to the service of the true God, and, by that baptism, bound them to the observation of the precepts which God gave to Noah.

5. But when God separated a family for his own

[a] John iv. 14.

[b] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

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special service, he gave them a sacrament of initiation, but it was a sacrament of blood, the covenant of circumcision: and this was the forerunner of baptism, but not a type; when that was abrogated, this came into the place of it, and that consigned the same faith which this professes. But it could not properly be a type, whose nature is, by a likeness of matter or ceremony, to represent the same mystery. Neither is a ceremony, as baptism truly is, properly capable of having a type; itself is but a type of a greater mysteriousness. And the nature of types is, in shadow to describe by dark lines a future substance:[c] so that, although circumcision might be a type of the effects and graces bestowed in baptism, yet of the baptism or ablution itself it cannot be properly, because of the unlikeness of the symbols and configurations, and because they are both equally distant from substances, which types are to consign and represent. The first bishops of Jerusalem, and all the christian Jews for many years, retained circumcision together with baptism; and Christ himself, who was circumcised, was also baptized; and therefore it is not so proper to call circumcision a type of baptism: it was rather a seal and sign of the same covenant to Abraham, and the fathers, and to all Israel, as baptism is to all ages of the christian church.

6. And because this rite could not be administered to all persons, and was not at all times after its institution, God was pleased by a proper and specific type to consign this rite of baptism, which he intended to all, and that for ever: and God, when the family of his church grew separate, notorious, numerous, and distinct, sent them into their own country by a baptism, through which the whole nation passed; for "all the fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;"[d] so by a double figure foretelling, that as they were initiated to Moses's law by the cloud above and the sea beneath, so should all the persons of the church, men, women, and children, be initiated unto Christ by the Spirit from above and the water below: for it was the design of the apostle in that discourse, to represent that the fathers and we were equal as to the privileges of the covenant; he proved that we do not exceed them, and it ought therefore to be certain, that they do not exceed us, nor their children ours.

7. But after this, something was to remain, which might not only consign the covenant, which God made with Abraham, but be as a passage from the fathers, through the synagogue, to the church, from Abraham by Moses to Christ: and that was circumcision, which was a rite which God chose to be a mark to the posterity of Abraham, to distinguish them from the nations, which were not within the covenant of grace, and to be "a seal of the righteousness of faith," which God made to be the spirit and life of the covenant.

8. But because circumcision, although it was ministered to all the males, yet it was not to the females, although they and all the nation were baptized and initiated into "Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" therefore the children of Israel, by imitation of the patriarchs, the posterity of Noah, used also ceremonial baptisms to their women, and to their proselytes, and to all that were circumcised; and the Jews deliver, that Sarah and Rebecca, when they were adopted into the family of the church, that is, of Abraham and Isaac, were baptized; and so were all strangers that were married to the sons of Israel. And that we may think this to be typical of christian baptism, the doctors of the Jews had a tradition, that when the Messias would come, there should be so many proselytes, that they could not be circumcised, but should be baptized. The tradition proved true, but not for their reason.

But that this rite of admitting into mysteries, and institutions, and offices of religion by baptisms, was used by the posterity of Noah, or at least very early among the Jews, besides the testimonies of their own doctors, I am the rather induced to believe, because the heathens had the same rite in many places, and in several religions: so they initiated disciples into the secrets of Mithra;[e] and the priests of Cotytto were called Baptæ, because by baptism they were admitted into the religion;[f] and they thought murder, incest, rapes, and the worst of crimes, were purged by dipping in the sea or fresh springs;[g] and a proselyte is called in Arrianus, Βεβαμμένος, Intinctus, a baptized person.

9. But this ceremony of baptizing was so certain and usual among the Jews, in their admitting proselytes, and adopting into institutions, that to baptize and to make disciples are all one; and when John the Baptist, by an order from heaven, went to prepare the way to the coming of our blessed Lord, he preached repentance, and baptized all that professed they did repent. He taught the Jews to live good lives, and baptized with the baptism of a prophet, such as was not unusually done by extraordinary and holy persons in the change or renewing of discipline or religion. Whether "John's baptism was from heaven, or of men," Christ asked the Pharisees. That it was from heaven the people therefore believed, because he was a prophet and a holy person: but it implies also, that such baptisms are sometimes from men, that is, used by persons of an eminent religion, or extraordinary fame for the gathering of disciples and admitting proselytes: and the disciples of Christ did so too;[h] even before Christ had instituted the sacrament for the christian church, the disciples that came to Christ were baptized by his apostles.

10. And now we are come to the gates of baptism. All these, till John, were but types and preparatory baptisms, and John's baptism was but the prologue to the baptism of Christ. The Jewish baptisms admitted proselytes to Moses, and to the law of

[c] Umbra in lege, imago in evangelio, veritas in cœlo.—S. AMBR.
[d] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
[e] Tertul. de Præscript. c. 40.
[f] Scholiast. in Juv. Sat. ii. lib. 1.
[g] O nimiùm faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
Tolli flumineâ posse putatis aquâ.
[h] John iv. 2.

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ceremonies; John's baptism called them to believe in the Messias now appearing, and to repent of their sins, to enter into the kingdom which was now at hand, and preached that repentance which should be for the remission of sins. His baptism remitted no sins,[i] but preached and consigned repentance, which, in the belief of the Messias, whom he pointed to, should pardon sins. But because he was taken from his office before the work was completed, the disciples of Christ finished it: they went forth preaching the same sermon of repentance, and the approach of the kingdom, and baptized, or made proselytes or disciples, as John did; only they (as it is probable) baptized in the name of Jesus, which it is not so likely John did. And this very thing might be the cause of the different forms of baptism recorded in the Acts,[k] of "baptizing in the name of Jesus,"[l] and at other times "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;"[m] the former being the manner of doing it in pursuance of the design of John's baptism, and the latter the form of institution by Christ for the whole christian church, appointed after his resurrection; the disciples, at first, using promiscuously what was used by the same authority, though with some difference of mystery.

11. The holy Jesus having found his way ready prepared by the preaching of John, and by his baptism, and the Jewish manner of adopting proselytes and disciples into the religion, a way chalked out for him to initiate disciples into his religion, took what was so prepared, and changed it into a perpetual sacrament. He kept the ceremony, that they, who were led only by outward things, might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony which their nation always used in the like cases: and, therefore, without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit, and give it a new grace, and a proper efficacy: he sublimed it to higher ends, and adorned it with stars of heaven; he made it to signify greater mysteries, to convey greater blessings, to consign the bigger promises, to cleanse deeper than the skin, and to carry proselytes farther than the gates of the institution. For so he was pleased to do in the other sacrament: he took the ceremony which he found ready in the custom of the Jews, where the major-domo, after the paschal supper, gave bread and wine to every person of his family; he changed nothing of it without, but transferred the rite to greater mysteries, and put his own Spirit to their sign, and it became a sacrament evangelical. It was so also in the matter of excommunication, where the Jewish practice was made to pass into christian discipline: without violence and noise "old things became new," while he fulfilled the law, making it up in full measures of the Spirit.

12. By these steps baptism passed on to a Divine evangelical institution, which we find to be consigned by three evangelists:[n] "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It was one of the last commandments the holy Jesus gave upon the earth, when he taught his apostles "the things which concerned his kingdom." For "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved:[o] but "unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;"[p] agreeable to the decretory words of God by Abraham in the circumcision, to which baptism does succeed in the consignation of the same covenant, and the same spiritual promises,[q] "The uncircumcised child, whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." The Manichees, Seleucus, Hermias, and their followers,[r] people of a day's abode and small interest, but of malicious doctrine, taught baptism not to be necessary, not to be used, upon this ground; because they supposed, that it was proper to John to baptize with water, and reserved for Christ, as his peculiar, to "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Indeed, Christ baptized none otherwise; he sent his Spirit upon the church in Pentecost, and baptized them with fire, the Spirit appearing like a flame: but he appointed his apostles to baptize with water, and they did so, and their successors after them, every where and for ever, not expounding, but obeying the preceptive words of their Lord, which were almost the last that he spake upon earth. And I cannot think it needful to prove this to be necessary, by any more arguments; for the words are so plain that they need no exposition: and yet if they had been obscure, the universal practice of the apostles, and the church, for ever, is a sufficient declaration of the commandment; no tradition is more universal, no, not of Scripture itself; no words are plainer, no, not the ten commandments: and if any suspicion can be superinduced, by any jealous or less discerning person, it will need no other refutation, but to turn his eyes to those lights, by which himself sees Scripture to be the word of God, and the commandments to be the declaration of his will.

13. But that which will be of greatest concernment in this affair, is, to consider the great benefits which are conveyed to us in this sacrament; for this will highly conclude, that the precept was for ever, which God so seconds with his grace, and mighty blessings; and the susception of it necessary, because we cannot be without those excellent things, which are the graces of the sacrament.

14. First: The fruit is, that "in baptism we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ," presented unto him, consigned with his sacrament, enter into his militia, give up our understandings and our choice to the obedience of Christ, and, in all senses that we can, become his disciples, witnessing a good confession, and undertaking a holy life: and therefore, in Scripture, μαθητεύειν and βαπτίζειν are con-

[i] Audi quid Scripturæ doceant: Joannis baptisma non tam peccata dimisit, quàm baptisma pœnitentiæ fuit in peccatorum remissionem, idque in futuram remissionem, quæ esset posteà per sanctificationem Christi subsequutura.—HIERONYM. adv. Luciferum.

[k] Vide supra, Sect. ix. n. l. [l] Acts viii. 16. Acts ii. 38.
[m] Matt. xxviii. 19. [n] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[o] Mark xvi. 16. [p] John iii. 5.
[q] Gen. xvii. 14. [r] S. Aug. Hæres. 46, 59.

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joined in their significations, as they are in the mystery; it is a giving up our names to Christ, and it is part of the foundation, or the first principles, of the religion, as appears in St. Paul's catechism;[s] it is so the first thing, that it is for babes and neophytes, in which they are matriculated and adopted into the house of their Father, and taken into the hands of their mother. Upon this account, baptism is called in antiquity, "Ecclesiæ janua, porta gratiæ, et primus introitus sanctorum ad æternam Dei et ecclesiæ consuetudinem:[t] the gate of the church, the door of grace, the first entrance of the saints to an eternal conversation with God and the church." St. Bernard calls it, "Sacramentum initiationis, et intrantium christianismum investituram: the sacrament of initiation, and the investiture of them that enter into the religion." And the person so entering is called *πεπεισμένος* and *συγκατατεθειμένος*,[u] one of the religion, or a proselyte and convert, and one added to the number of the church, in imitation of that of St. Luke, *ὁ Κύριος προσετίθει σωζομένους τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ*, "God added to the church those that should be saved;"[x] just as the church does to this day and for ever, baptizing infants and catechumens: *σωζόμενοι προστίθενται*, they are added to the church, that they may be added to the Lord, and the number of the inhabitants of heaven.

15. Secondly: The next step beyond this is "adoption into the covenant,"[y] which is an immediate consequent of the first presentation; this being the first act of man, that the first act of God. And this is called by St. Paul, a being "baptized in one Spirit into one body,"[z] that is, we are made capable of the communion of saints, the blessings of the faithful, the privileges of the church: by this we are, as St. Luke calls it, *τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*,[a] ordained, or disposed, "put into the order of eternal life," being made members of the mystical body, under Christ our Head.

16. Thirdly: And therefore "baptism is a new birth," by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom: and this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit;"[b] and it is by St. Paul called *λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας*,[c] "the laver of regeneration;" for now we begin to be reckoned in a new census, or account; God has become our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Spirit "the earnest of our inheritance," the church our mother; our food is the body and blood of our Lord, faith is our learning, religion our employment, and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and the mighty price of our high calling.[d] And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall, with them, enter into the portion of our inheritance. And, therefore, the primitive christians, who consigned all their affairs, and goods, and writings, with some marks of their Lord, usually writing Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ ὑιὸς, Σωτὴρ, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour," made it an abbreviature by writing only the capitals, thus, I. X. Θ. Υ. Σ. which the heathens, in mockery and derision, made Ἰχθὺς, which signifies a fish, and they used it for Christ, as a name of reproach: but the christians owned the name, and turned it into a pious metaphor, and were content that they should enjoy their pleasure in the acrostic; but upon that occasion Tertullian speaks pertinently to this article, "Nos pisciculi, secundum *ἰχθὺν* nostrum Jesum Christum, in aquâ nascimur;[e] Christ, whom you call a fish, we acknowledge to be our Lord and Saviour; and we, if you please, are the little fishes; for we are born in water, thence we derive our spiritual life." And because from henceforward we are a new creation, the church uses to assign new relations to the catechumens, spiritual fathers, and susceptors; and at their entrance into baptism, the christian and Jewish proselytes did use to cancel all secular affections to their temporal relatives. "Nec quicquam priùs imbuuntur quàm contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes, liberos, fratres vilia habere,"[f] said Tacitus of the christians: which was true in the sense only that Christ said, "He that doth not hate father or mother for my sake, is not worthy of me;" that is, he that doth not hate them *præ me*, rather than forsake me forsake them, is unworthy of me.

17. Fourthly: "In baptism all our sins are pardoned," according to the words of a prophet, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness."[g] "The catechumen descends into the font a sinner, he arises purified; he goes down the son of death, he comes up the son of the resurrection; he enters in the son of folly and prevarication, he returns the son of reconciliation; he stoops down the child of wrath, and ascends the heir of mercy; he was the child of the devil, and now he is the servant and the son of God." They are the words of Ven. Bede concerning this mystery.[h] And this was ingeniously signified by that Greek inscription upon a font, which is so prettily contrived, that the words may be read after the Greek or after the Hebrew manner, and be exactly the same; ΝΙΨΟΝ ΑΝΟΜΗΜΑ, ΜΗ ΜΟΝΑΝ ΟΨΙΝ, "Lord, wash my sin, and not my face only." And so it is intended and promised: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, and call on the name of the Lord,"[i] said Ananias to Saul; for "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, *τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι*, with the washing of water in the word;"[k] that is, baptism in the

[s] Heb. vi. 1, 2.
[t] S. August. lib. ii. c. 1. de Cat. Rudib.
[u] Just. Martyr. Apol. 2.
[x] Acts ii. 47.
[y] Τὸ *βάπτισμα καὶ υἱοθεσίας χάριν τυγχάνειν*.—CYRIL. Hierosol. Catec. 2.
[z] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[a] Acts xiii. 48.
[b] John iii. 5.
[c] Titus iii. 5.
[d] Διὰ *βαπτισμὸν ἀρχὴ ἑτέρου βίου γίνεται ἡμῖν, ἡ παλιγγενεσία, καὶ σφραγὶς, καῖ φυλακτήριον, καὶ φωτισμός*.—DAMASC. lib. iv. Orth. Fid. c. 10.
[e] Lib. de Baptis. c. 1.
[f] Lib. 5. Hist.
[g] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Πιστεύω ἓν *βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτίων*.—SYMB. Nicen.
[h] Lib. i. c. 3. in Joann
[i] Acts xxii. 16.
[k] Eph. v. 25, 26.

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christian religion: and, therefore, Tertullian calls baptism "lavacrum compendiatum,"[1] a compendious laver, that is, an entire cleansing the soul in that one action justly and rightly performed. In the rehearsal of which doctrine it was not an unpleasant etymology, that Anastasius Sinaita gave of baptism, *βάπτισμα*, quasi *βάπταισμα, ἐν ᾧ βάλλεται, ἤγουν πίπτει, τὸ πταῖσμα*, "in which our sins are thrown off;" and they fall like leeches when they are full of blood and water, or like the chains from St. Peter's hands at the presence of the angel. Baptism is *ἀνεκλόγιστος ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν*, an entire full forgiveness of sins, so that they shall never be called again to scrutiny.

"————Omnia dæmonis arma
His merguntur aquis, quibus ille renascitur infans,
Qui captivus erat————."[m]

The captivity of the soul is taken away by the blood of redemption, and the fiery darts of the devil are quenched by these salutary waters; and what the flames of hell are expiating or punishing to eternal ages, that is washed off quickly in the holy font, and an eternal debt paid in an instant. For so sure as the Egyptians were drowned in the Red sea, so sure are our sins washed in this holy flood: for this is a red sea too: these waters signify the blood of Christ: "These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."[n] *Τὸ αἷμα καθαρίζει, τὸ ὕδωρ καθαρίζει, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἁγνίζει· τὸ αἷμα διὰ πνεύματος, τὸ πνεῦμα διὰ ὕδατος*, "The blood of Christ cleanseth us, the water cleanseth us, the Spirit purifies us; the blood by the Spirit, the Spirit by the water,"[o] all in baptism and in pursuance of that baptismal state. These three are they that "bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood;" *καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσι*, "and these three agree in one," or are to one purpose;[p] they agree in baptism, and in the whole pursuance of the assistances which a christian needs all the days of his life. And therefore St. Cyril calls baptism, *τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον*, "the antitype of the passions of Christ." It does preconsign the death of Christ, and does the infancy of the work of grace, but not weakly; it brings from death to life; and though it brings us but to the birth in the new life, yet this is a greater change than is in all the periods of our growth to manhood, to "a perfect man in Christ Jesus."

18. Fifthly: Baptism does not only pardon our sins, but puts us into a state of pardon for the time to come. For baptism is the beginning of the new life, and an admission of us into the evangelical covenant, which on our parts consists in a sincere and timely endeavour to glorify God by faith and obedience; and on God's part he will pardon what is past, assist us for the future, and not measure us by grains and scruples, or exact our duties by the measure of an angel, but by the span of a man's hand. So that by baptism we are consigned to the mercies of God and the graces of the gospel; that is, that our pardon be continued, and our piety be a state of repentance. And therefore that baptism, which in the Nicene creed we profess to be for "the remission of sins," is called in the Jerusalem creed, "the baptism of repentance;" that is, it is the entrance of a new life, the gate to a perpetual change and reformation, all the way continuing our title to, and hopes of, forgiveness of sins. And this excellence is clearly recorded by St. Paul: "The kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man hath appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done:"[q] that is the formality of the gospel covenant, not to be exacted by the strict measures of the law: "but according to his mercy he saved us," that is, by gentleness and remissions, by pitying and pardoning us, by relieving and supporting us; because "he remembers that we are but dust." And all this mercy we are admitted to, and is conveyed to us *διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας*, "by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." And this plain, evident doctrine, was observed, explicated, and urged against the Messalians, who said that baptism was like a razor; that cuts away all the sins that were past, or presently adhering, but not the sins of our future life: *Οὐδὲ γὰρ τοῦτο μόνον ἐπαγγέλλεται τὸ μυστήριον, ἀλλὰ τὰ τούτων μείζω καὶ τελειότερα· ἀρραβὼν γάρ ἐστι τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῆς ἐσομένης ἀναστάσεως τύπος, καὶ κοινωνία τῶν δεσποτικῶν παθημάτων, καὶ μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, καὶ ἱμάτιον σωτηρίου, καὶ χιτὼν εὐφροσύνης, καὶ στολὴ φωτοειδὴς, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ φῶς.*[r] "This sacrament promises more and greater things; it is the earnest of future good things, the type of the resurrection, the communication of the Lord's passion, the partaking of his resurrection, the robe of righteousness, the garment of gladness, the vestment of light, or rather light itself." And for this reason it is that baptism is not to be repeated, because it does at once all that it can do at an hundred times; for it admits us to the condition of repentance and evangelical mercy; to a state of pardon for our infirmities and sins, which we timely and effectually leave: and this is a thing that can be done but once, as a man can begin but once. He that hath once entered in at this gate of life, is always in possibility of pardon, if he be in a possibility of working and doing, after the manner of a man, that which he hath promised to the Son of God. And this was expressly delivered and observed

[1] Lib. v. adv. Marc. c. 9. *Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τῶν ἀνθρώπων κακά.*—Gr. Prov.
Annon ità credimus, quia omne genus peccati, cùm ad salutare lavacrum venimus, aufertur.—ORIGEN. Hom. 15. in Josu.
Ecce quicquid iniquitatum sempiternus ignis excoquere et expiare vix posset, subitò sacro fonte submersum est, et de æternis debitis brevissimo lavacri compendio cum indulgentissimo creditore transactum est.—AMBROS. lib. i. cap. 7. de Pœnit.
Qui dicit peccata in baptismo non funditus dimitti, dicat in mari Rubro Ægyptios non veraciter mortuos.—S. GREG. M. lib. ix. ep. 39.
[m] Arator, lib. ii. Hist. Apostol.
[n] Rev. vii. 14.
[o] 1 John i. 7. Acts xxii. 16. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. ix. 14.
[p] 1 John v. 8.
[q] Titus iii. 4, 5.
[r] Theodor. Ep. de div. Decr. cap. de Bapt.

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by St. Austin:[s] "That which the apostle says, 'Cleansing him with the washing of water in the word,' is to be understood, that in the same laver of regeneration and word of sanctification, all the evils of the regenerate are cleansed and healed; not only the sins that are past, which are all now remitted in baptism, but also those that are contracted afterwards by human ignorance and infirmity: not that baptism be repeated as often as we sin,[t] but because by this, which is once administered, is brought to pass, that pardon of all sins, not only of those that are past, but also those which will be committed afterwards, is obtained." The Messalians denied this, and it was part of their heresy in the undervaluing of baptism; and for it they are most excellently confuted by Isidore Pelusiot, in his third book, epistle 195, to the Count Hermin, whither I refer the reader.

19. In proportion to this doctrine it is, that the holy Scripture calls upon us to live a holy life, in pursuance of this grace of baptism. And St. Paul recalls the lapsed Galatians to their covenant, and the grace of God stipulated in baptism: "Ye are all children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ;"[u] that is, "heirs of the promise, and Abraham's seed;" that promise which cannot be disannulled, increased, or diminished, but is the same to us as it was to Abraham, the same before the law and after. Therefore do not you hope to be "justified by the law;" for you are entered into the covenant of faith, and are to be justified thereby. This is all your hope; by this you must stand for ever, or you cannot stand at all; but by this you may: for "you are God's children by faith," that is, not by the law, or the covenant of works. And that you may remember whence you are going, and return again, he proves that they are the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, because they "have been baptized into Christ,"[x] and so "put on Christ." This makes you children, and such as are "to be saved by faith," that is, a covenant, "not of works," but of pardon in Jesus Christ, the author and establisher of this covenant. For this is the covenant made in baptism, that "being justified by his grace, we shall be heirs of life eternal; for by grace," that is, by favour, remission, and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, "ye are saved." This is the only way that we have of being justified, and this must remain as long as we are in hopes of heaven; for besides this we have no hopes: and all this is stipulated and consigned in baptism, and is of force after our fallings into sin and risings again. In pursuance of this, the same apostle declares, that the several states of sin are so many recessions from the state of baptismal grace; and if we arrive to the direct apostacy, and renouncing of, or a contradiction to, the state of baptism, we are then unpardonable, because we are fallen from our state of pardon. This St. Paul conditions most strictly, in his epistle to the Hebrews: "This is the covenant I will make in those days; I will put my laws in their hearts; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin;"[y] that is, our sins are so pardoned, that we need "no more oblation;" we are then made partakers of the death of Christ, which we afterwards renew in memory, and eucharist, and representment. But the great work is done in baptism; for so it follows, "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, that is, by the veil of his flesh," his incarnation. But how do we enter into this? Baptism is the door, and the ground of this confidence for ever: for so he adds, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This is the consignation of this blessed state, and the gate to all this mercy. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith,"[z] that is, the religion of a christian, the faith into which we were baptized; for that is the faith that justifies and saves us: let us therefore hold fast this profession of this faith, and do all the intermedial works, in order to the conservation of it; such as are, assembling in the communion of saints, (the use of the word and sacrament is included in the precept,) mutual exhortation, good example,[a] and the like: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth," that is, if we sin against the profession of this faith, and hold it not fast, but let the faith and the profession go wilfully, which afterwards he calls "a treading under foot the Son of God, accounting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing," and "a doing despite to the Spirit of grace," viz. which moved upon those waters, and did illuminate him in baptism; if we do this, "there is no more sacrifice for sins," no more deaths of Christ, into which you may be baptized; that is, you are fallen from the state of pardon and repentance, into which you were admitted in baptism, and in which you continue so long as you have not quitted your baptismal rights and the whole covenant. Contrary to this is that which St. Peter calls "making our calling and election sure," that is, a doing all that which may continue us in our state of baptism and the grace of the covenant. And between these two states, of absolute apostacy from, and entirely adhering to and securing, this state of calling and election, are all the intermedial sins, and being overtaken in single faults, or declining towards vicious habits, which in their several proportions are degrees of danger and insecurity; which St. Peter calls λήθην καθαρισμοῦ τῶν πάλαι ἀυτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν, "a forgetting our baptism, or purification from our sins."[b] And in this sense are those words, "The just shall live by faith," that is, by that profession which they made in baptism; from which if they swerve not, they shall be supported in their spiritual life. It is a grace which, by virtue of the covenant consigned in baptism, does, like a centre, transmit effluxes to all the periods and portions of our life; our whole life, all the periods of our succeeding hopes, are kept alive by this.

[s] Lib. de Nuptiis, c. 23, &c. Tract. 124. in Joan.
[t] Vide Salmer. tom. xiii. p. 487.
[u] Gal. iii. 26, 29.
[x] Ver. 27.
[y] Heb. x. 16–20.
[z] τῆς ἐλπίδος, scil. ad futurum respiciens.
[a] ἐπισυναγωγὴ, παράκλησις, κατανόησις.
[b] 2 Pet. i. 9. V. Part II. Disc. 9. of Repentance, num. 9. ad 31.

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This consideration is of great use, besides many other things, to reprove the folly of those, who in the primitive church deferred their baptism till their death-bed; because baptism is a laver of sanctification, and drowns all our sins, and buries them in the grave of our Lord, they thought they might sin securely upon the stock of an after-baptism; for unless they were strangely prevented by a sudden accident, a death-bed baptism they thought would secure their condition: but early some of them durst not take it, much less in the beginning of their years, that they might at least gain impunity for their follies and heats of their youth. Baptism hath influence into the pardon of all our sins, committed in all the days of our folly and infirmity; and so long as we have not been baptized, so long we are out of the state of pardon: and therefore an early baptism is not to be avoided, upon this mistaken fancy and plot upon heaven; it is the greater security towards the pardon of our sins, if we have taken it in the beginning of our days.

20. Sixthly: The next benefit of baptism, which is also a verification of this, is "a sanctification of the baptized person by the Spirit of grace."

> Sanctus in hunc cœlo descendit Spiritus amnem,
> Cœlestique sacras fonte maritat aquas:
> Concipit unda Deum, sanctamque liquoribus almis
> Edit ab æterno semine progeniem.[c]

The Holy Ghost descends upon the waters of baptism, and makes them prolific, apt to produce children unto God: and therefore St. Leo compares the font of baptism to the womb of the blessed Virgin, when it was replenished with the Holy Spirit. And this is the baptism of our dearest Lord: his ministers baptize with water; our Lord at the same time verifies their ministry with giving the Holy Spirit. They are joined together by St. Paul: "We are, by one Spirit, baptized into one body;"[d] that is, admitted into the church, by baptism of water and the Spirit. This is that which our blessed Lord calls "a being born of water and of the Spirit."[e] By water we are sacramentally dead and buried, by the Spirit we are made alive. But because these are mysterious expressions, and, according to the style of Scripture, high and secret in spiritual significations, therefore, that we may understand what these things signify, we must consider it by its real effects, and what it produces upon the soul of a man.

21. First: It is the suppletory of original righteousness, by which Adam was at first gracious with God, and which he lost by his prevarication. It was in him a principle of wisdom and obedience, a relation between God and himself, a title to the extraordinary mercies of God, and a state of friendship. When he fell, he was discomposed in all; the links of the golden chain and blessed relation were broken; and it so continued in the whole life of man, which was stained with the evils of this folly and the consequent mischiefs. And therefore, when we began the world again, entering into the articles of a new life, God gave us his Spirit, to be an instrument of our becoming gracious persons, and of being in a condition of obtaining that supernatural end which God at first designed to us. And therefore, as our baptism is a separation of us from unbelieving people; so the descent of the Holy Spirit upon us, in our baptism, is a consigning or marking us for God, as the sheep of his pasture, as the soldiers of his army, as the servants of his household. We are so separated from the world, that we are appropriated to God: so that God expects of us duty and obedience; and all sins are acts of rebellion and undutifulness. Of this nature was the sanctification of Jeremiah, and John the Baptist, from their mother's womb; that is, God took them to his own service, by an early designation, and his Spirit marked them to a holy ministry. To this also relates that of St. Paul, whom God by a decree separated from his mother's womb, to the ministry of the gospel: the decree did antedate the act of the Spirit, which did not descend upon him until the day of his baptism. What these persons were, in order to exterior ministers, that all the faithful are, in order to faith and obedience; consigned in baptism, by the Spirit of God, to a perpetual relation to God, in a continual service and title to his promises. And in this sense the Spirit of God is called σφραγίς, a seal,[f] "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise:"[g] τὸ μὲν ὕδωρ καθαίρει, τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα σφραγίζει τὴν ψυχήν. "The water washes the body, and the Spirit seals the soul," viz. to a participation of those promises which he hath made, and to which we receive a title by our baptism.

22. Secondly: The second effect of the Spirit is light or illumination; that is, the Holy Spirit becomes unto us the author of holy thoughts and firm persuasions, and "sets to his seal that the word of God is true," into the belief of which we are then baptized, and makes faith to be a grace, and the understanding resigned, and the will confident, and the assent stronger than the premises, and the propositions to be believed, because they are beloved: and we are taught the ways of godliness after a new manner, that is, we are made to perceive the secrets of the kingdom, and to love religion, and to long for heaven and heavenly things, and to despise the world, and to have new resolutions, and new perceptions, and new delicacies, in order to the establishment of faith and its increments and perseverance. Τῇ λαμπούσῃ ψυχῇ ἀπὸ κατακλυσμοῦ ἀνιδρυθεὶς ὁ Θεὸς, οἷον εἰ θρόνον ἀυτὴν ἑαυτῷ κατεργάζει·[h] "God sits in the soul, when it is illuminated in baptism, as if he sat in his throne;" that is, he rules by a firm persuasion, and entire principles of obedience. And therefore baptism is called in Scripture, φωτισμὸς, and the baptized, φωτισθέντες, illuminated: "Call to mind the former days, in which you were illuminated."[i] And the same phrase is in the sixth to the Hebrews,[k] where the parallel places expound each other. For that which St. Paul calls ἅπαξ φωτισθέντες, "once illuminated," he calls after,

[c] Paul Ep. 12. ad Serenum. [d] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[e] John iii. 5. S. Basil. de Spir. S. c. 15.
[f] 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. iv. 30. John vi. 27.
[g] Eph. i. 13. S. Cyril. Hieros. Catec. 3.
[h] S. Basil. in Psal. xxviii.
[i] Heb. x. 32. [k] Ver. 4.

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λαβόντες τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, "a receiving the knowledge of the truth:" and that you may perceive this to be wholly meant of baptism, the apostle expresses it still by synonymas: "Tasting of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience, and washed in our bodies with pure water;"[l] all which also are a syllabus or collection of the several effects of the graces bestowed in baptism. But we are now instancing in that which relates most properly to the understanding, in which respect the Holy Spirit also is called anointing or unction: and the mystery is explicated by St. John: "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things."[m]

23. Thirdly: The Holy Spirit descends upon us in baptism, to become the principle of a new life, to become a holy seed, springing up to holiness; and is called by St. John, σπέρμα Θεοῦ, "the seed of God:"[n] and the purpose of it we are taught by him: "Whosoever is born of God" (that is, he that is regenerated and entered into this new birth) "doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The Spirit of God is the Spirit of life; and now that he, by the Spirit, is born anew, he hath in him that principle, which, if it be cherished, will grow up to life, to life eternal. And this is "the Spirit of sanctification, the victory over the world," the deletery of concupiscence, the life of the soul, and the perpetual principle of grace sown in our spirits, in the day of our adoption to be the sons of God, and members of Christ's body. But take this mystery in the words of St. Basil:[o] "There are two ends proposed in baptism; to wit, to abolish the body of sin, that we may no more bring forth fruit unto death; and to live in the Spirit, and to have our fruit to sanctification. The water represents the image of death, receiving the body in its bosom, as in a sepulchre: but the quickening Spirit sends upon us a vigorous δύναμιν, power or efficacy, even from the beginning renewing our souls from the death of sin unto life; for as our mortification is perfected in the water, so the Spirit works life in us." To this purpose is the discourse of St. Paul: having largely discoursed of our being baptized into the death of Christ, he adds this as the corollary of all;[p] "He that is dead[q] is freed from sin;" that is, being mortified and buried[r] in the waters of baptism, we have a new life of righteousness put into us, we are quitted from the dominion of sin, and are planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection,[s] that henceforth we should not serve sin.[t]

24. Fourthly: But all these intermedial blessings tend to a glorious conclusion, for baptism does also consign us to a holy resurrection. It takes the sting of death from us, by burying us together with Christ; and takes off sin, which is the sting of death: and then we shall be partakers of a blessed resurrection. This we are taught by St. Paul: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."[u] That declares the real event in its due season. But because baptism consigns it, and admits us to a title to it, we are said, with St. Paul, to be "risen with Christ in baptism: buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, which hath raised him from the dead."[x] Which expression I desire to be remembered, that by it we may better understand those other sayings of the apostle, of "putting on Christ in baptism, putting on the new man," &c. for these only signify, ἐπιχείρημα, or the design on God's part, and the endeavour and duty on man's. We are then consigned to our duty, and to our reward; we undertake one, and have a title to the other. And though men of ripeness and reason enter instantly into their portion of work, and have present use of the assistances, and something of their reward in hand; yet we cannot conclude, that those that cannot do it presently, are not baptized rightly, because they are not in capacity to "put on the new man" in righteousness, that is, in an actual holy life; for they may "put on the new man" in baptism, just as "they are risen with Christ:" which, because it may be done by faith before it is done in real event, and it may be done by sacrament and design before it be done by a proper faith; so also may our putting on the new man be; it is done sacramentally, and that part, which is wholly the work of God, does only antedate the work of man, which is to succeed in its due time, and is after the manner of preventing grace. But this is by the by. In order to the present article, baptism is by Theodoret called μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, "a participation of the Lord's resurrection."

25. Fifthly and lastly: "By baptism we are saved:" that is, we are brought from death to life here, and that is "the first resurrection;" and we are brought from death to life hereafter, by virtue of the covenant of the state of grace, into which in baptism we enter, and are preserved from the second death, and receive a glorious and an eternal life. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,"[y] said our blessed Saviour; and "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."[z]

26. After these great blessings, so plainly testified in Scripture and the doctrine of the primitive church, which are regularly consigned and bestowed in baptism, I shall less need to descend to temporal blessings, or rare contingencies, or miraculous events, or probable notices of things less certain. Of this nature are those stories recorded in the writings of

[l] Heb. vi. 4.
[m] 1 John ii. 20, 27.
[n] 1 John iii. 9.
[o] Lib. de Spir. S. c. 18.
[p] Rom. vi. 7.
[q] χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτιννῦναι.—PLUTARCH.
[r] Ibid. ver. 4.
[s] Ver. 5.
[t] Ver. 6. Vide Disc. 9, of Repentance, n. 46.
[u] Rom. vi. 3, 5.
[x] Col. ii. 12.
[y] Mark xvi. 16.
[z] Titus iii. 5.

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the church,[a] that Constantine was cured of a leprosy in baptism; Theodosius recovered of his disease, being baptized by the bishop of Thessalonica; and a paralytic Jew was cured as soon as he became a christian, and was baptized by Atticus of Constantinople; and bishop Arnulph baptizing a leper, also cured him, said Vincentius Bellovacensis. It is more considerable, which is generally and piously believed by very many eminent persons in the church, that, at our baptism, God assigns an angel-guardian, (for then the catechumen, being made a servant and a brother to the Lord of angels, is sure not to want the aids of them who "pitch their tents round about them that fear the Lord,"[b]) and that this guard and ministry is then appointed when themselves are admitted into the inheritance of the promises; and their title to salvation is hugely agreeable to the words of St. Paul, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?"[c] where it appears, that the title to the inheritance is the title to this ministry, and therefore must begin and end together. But I insist not on this, though it seems to me hugely probable. All these blessings put into one syllabus, have given to baptism many honourable appellatives in Scripture and other divine writers,[d] calling it *ἀναγέννησιν, παλιγγενεσίαν, ὄχημα πρὸς θεὸν, ὄχημα πρὸς οὐρανὸν, βασιλείας πρόξενον, τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, μεγάλην περιτομὴν ἀχειροποίητον, ἀνακαίνωσιν, ἐπερώτημα, ἀρραβῶνα, ἐνέχυρον, ἀπόδειξιν, ἀνάκτισιν, ἔνδυμα φωτεινὸν*, sacramentum vitæ et æternæ salutis: "A new birth, a regeneration, a renovation, a chariot carrying us to God, the great circumcision, a circumcision made without hands, the key of the kingdom, the paranymph of the kingdom, the earnest of our inheritance, the answer of a good conscience, the robe of light, the sacrament of a new life and of eternal salvation." *Ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ.* This is celestial water, springing from the sides of the rock upon which the church was built, when the rock was smitten with the rod of God.

27. It remains now that we inquire what concerns our duty, and in what persons, or in what dispositions, baptism produces all these glorious effects: for the sacraments of the church work in the virtue of Christ, but yet only upon such as are servants of Christ, and hinder not the work of the Spirit of grace. For the water of the font, and the Spirit of the sacrament, are indeed to wash away our sins, and to purify our souls; but not unless we have a mind to be purified. The sacrament works pardon for them that hate their sin, and procures grace for them that love it. They that are guilty of sins, must repent of them, and renounce them, and they must make a profession of the faith of Christ, and give, or be given, up to the obedience of Christ; and then they are rightly disposed. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,"[e] saith Christ; and St. Peter called out to the whole assembly, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you."[f] Concerning this, Justin Martyr[g] gives the same account of the faith and practice of the church; *Ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι καὶ πιστεύωσιν*, &c. "Whosoever are persuaded, and believe those things to be true, which are delivered and spoken by us, and undertake to live accordingly, they are commanded to fast and pray, and to ask of God remission for their former sins, we also praying together with them, and fasting. Then they are brought to us where water is, and are regenerated in the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves are regenerated." For in baptism, St. Peter observes, there are two parts, the body and the spirit: that is, *σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥυπου*, "the putting away the filth of the flesh,"[h] that is, the material washing; and this is baptism no otherwise than a dead corpse is a man: the other is *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα*, "the answer of a good conscience towards God," that is, the conversion of the soul to God; that is, the effective disposition in which baptism does save us. And in the same sense are those sayings of the primitive doctors to be understood, "Anima non lavatione, sed responsione sancitur,"[i] the soul is not healed by washing (viz.) alone, but by the answer, the *ἐπερώτημα* in St. Peter, the correspondent of our part of the covenant: for that is the perfect sense of this unusual expression. And the effect is attributed to this, and denied to the other, when they are distinguished. So Justin Martyr affirms: "The only baptism that can heal us is repentance, and the knowledge of God. For what need is there of that baptism, that can only cleanse the flesh and the body? Be washed in your flesh from wrath and covetousness, from envy and hatred; and behold the body is pure."[k] And Clemens Alexandrinus, upon that proverbial saying, *Ἴσθι μὴ λουτρῷ, ἀλλὰ νόῳ καθαρὸς*, "Be not pure in the laver, but in the mind," adds, "I suppose that an exact and a firm repentance is a sufficient purification to a man; if judging and considering ourselves for the facts we have done before, we proceed to that which is before us, considering that which follows, and cleansing or washing our mind from sensual affections, and from former sins." Just as we use to deny the effect to the instrumental cause, and attribute it to the principal in the manner of speaking, when our purpose is to affirm this to be the principal, and of chief influence. So we say, it is not the good lute, but the skilful hand, that makes the music: it is not the body, but the soul, that is the man; and yet he is not the man without both. For baptism is but the material part in the sacrament, "it is the Spirit that giveth life;" whose work is faith and repentance begun by himself without the sacrament, and consigned

[a] Niceph. lib. vii. c. 35. Socr. lib. 5. c. 6. Idem, lib. vii. c. 7.
[b] Psalm xxxiv. 7.
[c] Heb. i. 14.
[d] Basil. Theod. Epiphan. Nazianz. Col. ii. 2. Cyril. Hieros. Dionys. Areop. Aug. lib. ii. c. 13. contrà Crescon. Gram.
[e] Mark xvi. 16.
[f] Acts ii. 38.
[g] Apol. ad Anton. Cæs.
[h] 1 Pet. iii. 21.
[i] Tert. de Res. Carn.
[k] Ad Tryphon Jud.

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in the sacrament, and actuated and increased in the co-operation of our whole life. And therefore baptism is called in the Jerusalem creed, ἓν βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, "one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:" and by Justin Martyr,[l] λουτρὸν τῆς μετανοίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὃ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀνομίας τῶν λαῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ γέγονεν, "the baptism of repentance, and the knowledge of God, which was made for the sins of the people of God." He explains himself a little after, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ μόνον καθαρίσαι τοντὸ μετανοήσαντας δυνάμενον, "baptism that can only cleanse them that are penitent." "In sacramentis Trinitati occurrit fides credentium et professio, quæ apud acta conficitur angelorum, ubi miscentur cœlestia et spiritualia semina; ut sancto germine nova possit renascentium indoles procreari, ut dum Trinitas cum fide concordat, qui natus fuerit seculo renascatur spiritualiter Deo. Sic fit hominum Pater Deus, sancta fit mater ecclesia," said Optatus.[m] "The faith and profession of the believers meets with the ever-blessed Trinity, and is recorded in the register of angels, where heavenly and spiritual seeds are mingled; that from so holy a spring may be produced a new nature of the regeneration, that while the Trinity (viz. that is invocated upon the baptized) meets with the faith of the catechumen, he that was born to the world may be born spiritually to God. So God is made a Father to the man, and the holy church a mother." Faith and repentance strip the old man naked, and make him fit for baptism; and then the Holy Spirit, moving upon the waters, cleanses the soul, and makes it to put on the new man, who grows up to perfection and a spiritual life, to a life of glory, by our verification of our undertaking in baptism on our part, and the graces of the Spirit on the other. For the waters pierce no farther than the skin, till the person puts off his affection to the sin that he hath contracted; and then he may say, "Aquæ intraverunt usque ad animam meam," "The waters are entered even unto my soul, to purify and cleanse it, by the washing of water, and the renewing by the Holy Spirit." The sum is this:[n] Βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υἱοποιούμεθα, υἱοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀθανατιζόμεθα. "Being baptized we are illuminated, being illuminated we are adopted to the inheritance of sons, being adopted we are promoted towards perfection, and being perfected we are made immortal."

Quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat indè
Semideus, tactis citò nobilitetur in undis.

28. This is the whole doctrine of baptism, as it is in itself considered, without relation to rare circumstances or accidental cases: and it will also serve to the right understanding of the reasons why the church of God hath, in all ages, baptized all persons that were within her power, for whom the church could stipulate, that they were, or might be, relatives of Christ, sons of God, heirs of the promises, and partners of the covenant, and such as did not hinder the work of baptism upon their souls. And such were not only persons of age and choice, but the infants of christian parents. For the understanding and verifying of which truth, I shall only need to apply the parts of the former discourse to their particular case, premising first these propositions.

[l] Dial. cum Tryph. [m] Lib. ii. adv. Parm.
[n] Clem. Alex. lib. i. Pædag. c. 6.

Of Baptizing Infants.

PART II.

1. BAPTISM is the key in Christ's hand, and therefore opens as he opens, and shuts by his rule: and as Christ himself did not do all his blessings and effects unto every one, but gave to every one as they had need; so does baptism. Christ did not cure all men's eyes, but them only that were blind; "Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance:" that is, they that lived in the fear of God, according to the covenant in which they were debtors, were indeed improved and promoted higher by Christ, but not called to that repentance to which he called the vicious gentiles, and the adulterous persons among the Jews, and the hypocritical Pharisees. There are some so innocent that they "need no repentance," saith the Scripture; meaning, that though they do need contrition for their single acts of sin, yet they are within the state of grace, and need not repentance as it is a conversion of the whole man. And so it is in baptism, which does all its effects upon them that need them all, and some upon them that need but some: and therefore, as it pardons sins to them that have committed them, and do repent and believe; so to the others, who have not committed them, it does all the work which is done to the others above or besides that pardon.

2. Secondly: When the ordinary effect of a sacrament is done already by some other efficiency or instrument, yet the sacrament is still as obligatory as before, not for so many reasons or necessities, but for the same commandment. Baptism is the first ordinary current in which the Spirit moves and descends upon us; and where God's Spirit is, they are the sons of God, for Christ's Spirit descends upon none but them that are his: and yet Cornelius,[a] who had received the Holy Spirit, and was heard by God, and visited by an angel, and accepted in his alms, and fastings, and prayers, was tied to the susception of baptism. To which may be added, that the receiving the effects of baptism beforehand was used as an argument the rather to administer baptism. The effect of which consideration is this, that baptism and its effects may be separated, and do not always go in conjunction; the effect may be before, and therefore much rather may it be after, its susception; the sacrament operating in the virtue of Christ, even "as the Spirit shall move:" according to that saying of St. Austin,[b] "Sacrosancto lavacro inchoata innovatio novi hominis perficiendo perficitur in aliis citiùs, in aliis tardiùs;" and St. Bernard,[c] "Lavari quidem citò possumus, sed ad

[a] Acts x. 47. [b] Aug. de Moribus Eccles. Cath. lib. i. c. 35. [c] Bern. Serm. de Cœna Dom.

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sanandum multâ curatione opus est." The work of regeneration, that is begun in the ministry of baptism, is perfected in some sooner, in some later.—We may soon be washed; but to be healed is a work of a long cure."

3. Thirdly: The dispositions, which are required to the ordinary susception of baptism, are not necessary to the efficacy, or required to the nature, of the sacrament, but accidentally, and because of the superinduced necessities of some men; and therefore the conditions are not regularly to be required. But, in those accidents, it was necessary for a gentile proselyte to repent of his sins, and to believe in Moses's law, before he could be circumcised: but Abraham was not tied to the same conditions, but only to faith in God; but Isaac was not tied to so much; and circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers: and yet, after the sanction of Moses's law, men were tied to conditions, which were then made necessary to them that entered into the covenant, but not necessary to the nature of the covenant itself. And so it is in the susception of baptism: if a sinner enters into the font, it is necessary he be stripped of those appendages, which himself sewed upon his nature, and then repentance is a necessary disposition: if his understanding hath been a stranger to religion, polluted with evil principles and a false religion, it is necessary he have an actual faith, that he be given in his understanding up to the obedience of Christ. And the reason of this is plain; because, in these persons, there is a disposition contrary to the state and effects of baptism; and therefore they must be taken off by their contraries, faith and repentance, that they may be reduced to the state of pure receptives. And this is the sense of those words of our blessed Saviour, "Unless ye become like one of these little ones, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be admitted into the gospel covenant, unless all your contrarieties and impediments be taken from you, and you be as apt as children to receive the new immissions from heaven. And this proposition relies upon a great example, and a certain reason. The example is our blessed Saviour, who was "nullius pœnitentiæ debitor;" he had committed no sin, and needed no repentance; he needed not to be saved by faith, for of faith he was "the author and finisher," and the great object, and its perfection and reward: and yet he was baptized by the baptism of John, the baptism of repentance. And therefore it is certain, that repentance and faith are not necessary to the susception of baptism, but necessary to some persons that are baptized. For it is necessary we should much consider the difference. If the sacrament by any person may be justly received, in whom such dispositions are not to be found, then the dispositions are not necessary or intrinsical to the susception of the sacrament; and yet some persons coming to this sacrament may have such necessities of their own, as will make the sacrament ineffectual without such dispositions. These I call necessary to the person, but not to the sacrament; that is, necessary to all such, but not necessary to all absolutely. And faith is necessary sometimes, where repentance is not; sometimes repentance and faith together, and sometimes otherwise. When Philip [d] baptized the eunuch, he only required of him to believe, not to repent. But St. Peter,[e] when he preached to the Jews, and converted them, only required repentance; which, although it, in their case, implied faith, yet there was no explicit stipulation for it: they had "crucified the Lord of life;" [f] and if they would come to God by baptism, they must renounce their sin; that was all was then stood upon. It is as the case is, or as the persons have superinduced necessities upon themselves. In children the case is evident as to the one part, which is equally required; I mean repentance: the not doing of which cannot prejudice them as to the susception of baptism, because they, having done no evil, are not bound to repent; and to repent is as necessary to the susception of baptism as faith is. But this shows, that they are accidentally necessary; that is, not absolutely, not to all, not to infants: and if they may be excused from one duty, which is indispensably necessary to baptism, why they may not from the other is a secret, which will not be found out by these, whom it concerns to believe it.

4. And therefore, when our blessed Lord made a stipulation and express commandment for faith, with the greatest annexed penalty to them that had it not, "he that believeth not, shall be damned," the proposition is not to be verified or understood as relative to every period of time; for them no man could be converted from infidelity to the christian faith, and from the power of the devil to the kingdom of Christ, but his present infidelity shall be his final ruin. It is not therefore γνώμη, but χρεία, not a sentence, but a use, a prediction and intermination. It is not like that saying, "God is true, and every man a liar," and, "Every good and every perfect gift is from above;" for these are true in every instant, without reference to circumstances: but "he that believeth not, shall be damned," is a prediction, or that which in rhetoric is called χρεία, or a use, because this is the affirmation of that, which usually or frequently comes to pass; such as this: "He that strikes with the sword, shall perish by the sword; he that robs a church, shall be like a wheel," of a vertiginous and unstable estate; "he that loves wine and oil, shall not be rich:" and therefore it is a declaration of that, which is universally or commonly true; but not so, that in what instant soever a man is not a believer, in that instant it is true to say he is damned; for some are called the third, some the sixth, some the ninth hour; and they that come in, being first called at the eleventh hour, shall have their reward: so that this sentence stands true at the day and the judgment of the Lord, not at the judgment or day of man. And in the same necessity as faith stands to salvation, in the same it stands to baptism; that is, to be measured by the whole latitude of its extent. Our baptism shall no more do all its intention, unless faith supervene, than a man is in possibility of being saved

[d] Acts viii. 37. [e] Acts ii. 38. [f] Acts iii. 15.

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without faith; it must come in its due time, but is not indispensably necessary in all instances and periods. Baptism is the seal of our election and adoption; and as election is brought to effect by faith and its consequents, so is baptism; but to neither is faith necessary as to its beginning and first entrance. To which also I add this consideration, that actual faith is necessary, not to the susception, but to the consequent effects, of baptism, appears, because the church, and particularly the apostles, did baptize some persons who had not faith, but were hypocrites; such as were Simon Magus, Alexander the coppersmith, Demas, and Diotrephes; and such was Judas when he was baptized, and such were the Gnostic teachers. For the effect depends upon God, who knows the heart, but the outward susception depends upon them, who do not know it; which is a certain argument that the same faith, which is necessary to the effect of the sacrament, is not necessary to its susception; and if it can be administered to hypocrites, much more to infants; if to those who really hinder the effect, much rather to them that hinder not. And if it be objected, that the church does not know but the pretenders have faith, but she knows infants have not; I reply, that the church does not know but the pretenders hinder the effect, and are contrary to the grace of the sacrament, but she knows that infants do not: the first possibly may receive the grace, the other cannot hinder it.

5. But besides these things, it is considerable, that, when it is required, persons have faith. It is true, they that require baptism should give a reason why they do; so it was in the case of the eunuch baptized by Philip: but this is not to be required of others that do not ask it, and yet they may be of the church, and of the faith; for by faith is also understood the christian religion, and the christian faith is the christian religion, and of this a man may be, though he make no confession of his faith, as a man may be of the church, and yet not be of the number of God's secret ones; and to this, more is required than to that: to the first, it is sufficient that he be admitted by a sacrament or a ceremony; which is infallibly certain, because hypocrites and wicked people are in the visible communion of the church, and are reckoned as members of it, and yet to them there was nothing done but the ceremony administered; and therefore, when that is done to infants, they also are to be reckoned in the church communion. And indeed, in the examples of Scripture, we find more inserted into the number of God's family by outward ceremony than by the inward grace. Of this number were all those, who were circumcised the eighth day, who were admitted thither, as the woman's daughter was cured in the gospel, by the faith of their mother, their natural parents, or their spiritual; to whose faith it is as certain God will take heed, as to their faith who brought one to Christ, who could not come himself, the poor paralytic; for when Christ saw their faith, he cured their friend: and yet it is to be observed, that Christ did use to exact faith, actual faith, of them that came to him to be cured; "According to your faith be it unto you."[g] The case is equal in its whole kind. And it is considerable what Christ saith to the poor man, that came in behalf of his son, "All things are possible to him that believeth:"[h] it is possible for a son to receive the blessing and benefit of his father's faith; and it was so in his case, and is possible to any; for "to faith all things are possible." And as to the event of things, it is evident in the story of the gospel, that the faith of their relatives was equally effective to children and friends or servants, absent or sick, as the faith of the interested person was to himself: as appears, beyond all exception, in the case of the friends of the paralytic, let down with cords through the tiles; of the centurion,[i] in behalf of his servant; of the nobleman, for his son sick at Capernaum;[k] of the Syrophœnician, for her daughter: and Christ required faith of no sick man, but of him that presented himself to him,[l] and desired for himself that he might be cured, as it was in the case of the blind man. Though they could not believe, yet Christ required belief of them that came to him on their behalf. And why then it may not be so, or is not so, in the case of infants' baptism, I confess it is past my skill to conjecture. The reason on which this further relies, is contained in the next proposition.

6. Fourthly: No disposition, or act of man, can deserve the first grace, or the grace of pardon: for so long as a man is unpardoned, he is an enemy to God, and as a dead person; and, unless he be prevented by the grace of God, cannot do a single act in order to his pardon and restitution; so that the first work which God does upon a man, is so wholly his own, that the man hath nothing in it, but to entertain it; that is, not to hinder the work of God upon him. And this is done in them that have in them nothing that can hinder the work of grace, or in them who remove the hinderances. Of the latter sort are all sinners, who have lived in a state contrary to God; of the first are they, who are prevented by the grace of God before they can choose; that is, little children, and those that become like unto little children. So that faith and repentance are not necessary at first to the reception of the first grace, but by accident. If sin have drawn curtains, and put bars and coverings to the windows, these must be taken away; and that is done by faith and repentance: but if the windows be not shut, so that the light can pass through them, the eye of Heaven will pass in and dwell there. "No man can come unto me, unless my Father draw him;"[m] that is, the first access to Christ is nothing of our own, but wholly of God; and it is as in our creation, in which we have an obediential capacity, but co-operate not; only if we be contrary to the work of grace, that contrariety must be taken off, else there is no necessity. And if all men, according to Christ's saying, must "receive the kingdom of God as little children,"[n] it is cer-

[g] Matt. ix. 29. [h] Mark ix. 23.
[i] Matt. viii. 13. [k] John iv. 50.
[l] Matt. ix. 28. [m] John vi. 44.
[n] Mark x. 15

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tain, little children do receive it; they receive it as all men ought; that is, without any impediment or obstruction, without any thing within that is contrary to that state.

7. Fifthly: Baptism is not to be estimated as one act, transient and effective to single purposes; but it is an entrance to a conjugation and a state of blessings. All our life is to be transacted by the measures of the gospel covenant, and that covenant is consigned by baptism; there we have our title and adoption to it: and the grace that is then given to us, is like a piece of leaven put into a lump of dough, and faith and repentance do, in all the periods of our life, put it into fermentation and activity. Then the seed of God is put into the ground of our hearts, and repentance waters it, and faith makes it subactum solum, the ground and furrows apt to produce fruits; and therefore faith and repentance are necessary to the effect of baptism, not to its susception; that is, necessary to all those parts of life, in which baptism does operate, not to the first sanction or entering into the covenant. The seed may lie long in the ground, and produce fruits in its due season, if it be refreshed with "the former and the latter rain;" that is, the repentance that first changes the state, and converts the man, and afterwards returns him to his title, and recalls him from his wanderings, and keeps him in the state of grace, and within the limits of the covenant: and all the way faith gives efficacy and acceptation to this repentance; that is, continues our title to the promise of not having righteousness exacted by the measures of the law, but by the covenant and promise of grace, into which we entered in baptism, and walk in the same all the days of our life.

8. Sixthly: The Holy Spirit, which descends upon the waters of baptism, does not instantly produce its effects in the soul of the baptized; and when it does, it is irregularly, and as it pleases. "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth;" and the catechumen is admitted into the kingdom, yet "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation:"[o] and this saying of our blessed Saviour was spoken of "the kingdom of God that is within us:"[p] that is, the Spirit of grace, the power of the gospel put into our hearts, concerning which he affirmed, that it operates so secretly, that it comes not with outward show; "neither shall they say, Lo here, or Lo there." Which thing I desire the rather to be observed, because, in the same discourse, which our blessed Saviour continued to that assembly, he affirms "this kingdom of God" to belong unto "little children,"[q] this kingdom, that "cometh not with outward significations," or present expresses, this kingdom that is within us. For the present, the use I make of it is this: that no man can conclude that this kingdom of power, that is, the Spirit of sanctification, is not come upon infants, because there is no sign or expression of it. It is "within us," therefore it hath no signification. It is "the seed of God;" and it is no good argument to say, here is no seed in the bowels of the earth, because there is nothing green upon the face of it. For the church gives the sacrament, God gives the grace of the sacrament. But because he does not always give it at the instant in which the church gives the sacrament, (as if there be a secret impediment in the suscipient,) and yet afterwards does give it, when the impediment is removed, (as to them that repent of that impediment,) it follows, that the church may administer rightly, even before God gives the real grace of the sacrament: and if God gives this grace afterwards by parts, and yet all of it is the effect of that covenant, which was consigned in baptism; he that defers some, may defer all, and verify every part, as well as any part. For it is certain, that in the instance now made, all the grace is deferred; in infants, it is not certain but that some is collated or infused: however, be it so or no, yet upon this account the administration of the sacrament is not hindered.

9. Seventhly: When the Scripture speaks of the effects of, or dispositions to, baptism, it speaks in general expressions, as being most apt to signify a common duty, or a general effect, or a more universal event, or the proper order of things: but those general expressions do not "supponere universaliter;" that is, are not to be understood exclusively to all that are not so qualified, or universally of all suscipients, or of all the subjects of the proposition. When the prophets complain of the Jews, that they are fallen from God, and turned to idols, and walk not in the way of their fathers; and at other times the Scripture speaks the same thing of their fathers, that they walked perversely towards God, "starting aside like a broken bow;" in these, and the like expressions, the holy Scripture uses a synecdoche, or signifies many only, under the notion of a more large and indefinite expression: for neither were all the fathers good, neither did all the sons prevaricate; but among the fathers there were enough to recommend to posterity by way of example, and among the children there were enough to stain the reputation of the age; but neither the one part nor the other was true of every single person. St. John the Baptist spake to the whole audience, saying, "O generation of vipers!" and yet he did not mean that all Jerusalem and Judea, that "went out to be baptized of him," were such; but he, under an undeterminate reproof, intended those that were such, that is, especially the priests and the Pharisees. And it is more considerable yet in the story of the event of Christ's sermon in the synagogue, upon his text taken out of Isaiah, "all wondered at his gracious words, and bare him witness;"[r] and a little after, "all they in the synagogue were filled with wrath:" that is, it was generally so, but hardly to be supposed true of every single person, in both the contrary humours and usages. Thus Christ said to the apostles, "Ye have abode with me in my temptations;" and yet Judas was all the way a follower of interest and the bag, rather than Christ, and afterwards none of them all did abide with Christ in his greatest temptations. Thus also, to come nearer the present question, the secret

[o] Luke xvii. 20. [p] Verse 21. [q] Luke xviii. 16. [r] Luke iv. 22, 28.

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effects of election, and of the Spirit, are in Scripture attributed to all that are of the outward communion. So St. Peter calls all the christian strangers of the eastern dispersion, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" [s] and St. Paul saith of all the Roman christians, and the same of the Thessalonians, that their "faith was spoken of in all the world:" and yet amongst them it is not to be supposed, that all the professors had an unreprovable faith, or that every one of the church of Thessalonica was an excellent and a charitable person; and yet the apostle useth this expression, "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth." [t] These are usually significant of a general custom or order of things, or duty of men, or design, and natural or proper expectation of events. Such are these also in this very question, "As many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;" that is, so it is regularly, and so it will be in its due time, and that is the order of things, and the designed event: but from hence we cannot conclude of every person, and in every period of time, "This man hath been baptized," therefore "now he is clothed with Christ, he hath put on Christ;" nor thus, "This person cannot, in a spiritual sense, as yet put on Christ," therefore "he hath not been baptized," that is, "he hath not put him on in a sacramental sense." Such is the saying of St. Paul, "whom he hath predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified:" [u] this also declares the regular event, or at least the order of things, and the design of God, but not the actual verification of it to all persons. These sayings concerning baptism in the like manner are to be so understood, that they cannot exclude all persons from the sacrament, that have not all those real effects of the sacrament at all times, which some men have at some times, and all men must have at some time or other, viz. when the sacrament obtains its last intention. But he that shall argue from hence, that children are not rightly baptized, because they cannot in a spiritual sense put on Christ, concludes nothing, unless these propositions did signify universally, and at all times, and in every person, and in every manner: which can no more pretend to truth, than that all christians are God's elect, and all that are baptized are saints, and all that are called are justified, and all that are once justified shall be saved finally. These things declare only the event of things, and their order, and the usual effect, and the proper design, in their proper season, in their limited proportions.

10. Eighthly: A negative argument for matters of fact in Scripture cannot conclude a law, or a necessary or a regular event. And therefore, supposing that it be not intimated, that the apostles did baptize infants, it follows not that they did not, and if they did not, it does not follow that they might not, or that the church may not. For it is unreasonable to argue, the Scripture speaks nothing of the baptism of the holy Virgin-mother, therefore she was not baptized. The words and deeds of Christ are infinite which are not recorded, and of the acts of the apostles we may suppose the same in their proportion: and therefore what they did not is no rule to us, unless they did it not because they were forbidden. So that it can be no good argument to say, the apostles are not read to have baptized infants, therefore infants are not to be baptized; but thus, we do not find that infants are excluded from the common sacraments and ceremonies of christian institution, therefore we may not presume to exclude them. For although the negative of a fact is no good argument, yet the negative of a law is a very good one. We may not say, the apostles did not, therefore we may not; but thus, they were not forbidden to do it, there is no law against it, therefore it may be done. No man's deeds can prejudicate a Divine law expressed in general terms, much less can it be prejudiced by those things that were not done. "That which is wanting cannot be numbered," [x] cannot be effectual; therefore, "Baptize all nations," must signify all that it can signify, all that are reckoned in the capitations and accounts of a nation. Now, since all contradiction to this question depends wholly upon these two grounds, the negative argument in matter of fact, and the pretences that faith and repentance are required to baptism; since the first is wholly nothing, and infirm upon an infinite account, and the second may conclude, that infants can no more be saved than be baptized, because faith is more necessary to salvation than to baptism; it being said, "He that believeth not shall be damned," and it is not said, "He that believeth not shall be excluded from baptism;" it follows, that the doctrine of those that refuse to baptize their infants, is, upon both its legs, weak, and broken, and insufficient.

11. Upon the supposition of these grounds, the baptism of infants, according to the perpetual practice of the church of God, will stand firm and unshaken upon its own base. For, as the eunuch said to Philip, "What hinders them to be baptized?" If they can receive benefit by it, it is infallibly certain, that it belongs to them also to receive it, and to their parents to procure it; for nothing can deprive us of so great a grace but an unworthiness, or a disability. They are not disabled to receive it, if they need it, and if it does them good, and they have neither done good nor evil, and, therefore, they have not forfeited their right to it. This, therefore, shall be the first great argument or combination of inducements: Infants receive many benefits by the susception of baptism, and therefore, in charity and in duty, we are to bring them to baptism.

12. First: The first effect of baptism is, that in it we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ, offered and presented unto him. In which certainly there is the same act of worship to God, and the same blessing to the children of christians, as there was in presenting the first-born among the Jews. For our children can be God's own portion as well as theirs: and as they presented the first-born to God, and so acknowledged that God might have taken his life in sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of

[s] 1 Pet. i. 2. [t] 2 Thess. i. 3. [u] Rom. viii. 30. [x] Eccles. i. 15.

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the lamb, or the oblation of a beast; yet, when the right was confessed, God gave him back again, and took a lamb in exchange, or a pair of doves: so are our children presented to God as forfeit, and God might take the forfeiture, and not admit the babe to the promises of grace; but when the presentation of the child and our acknowledgment is made to God, God takes the Lamb of the world in exchange, and he hath paid our forfeiture, and the children are "holy unto the Lord." And what hinders here? Cannot a cripple receive an alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple, unless he go thither himself? or cannot a gift be presented to God by the hands of the owners, and the gift become holy and pleasing to God, without its own consent? The parents have a portion of the possession: children are blessings, and God's gifts, and the father's greatest wealth, and, therefore, are to be given again to him. In other things we give something to God of all that he gives us; all we do not, because our needs force us to retain the greater part, and the less sanctifies the whole: but our children must all be returned to God; for we may love them, and so may God too, and they are the better our own by being made holy in their presentation. Whatsoever is given to God is holy, every thing in its proportion and capacity: a lamb is holy, when it becomes a sacrifice; and a table is holy, when it becomes an altar; and a house is holy, when it becomes a church; and a man is holy, when he is consecrated to be a priest; and so is every one, that is dedicated to religion: these are holy persons, the others are holy things. And infants are between both: they have the sanctification that belongs to them, the holiness that can be of a reasonable nature offered and destined to God's service; but not in that degree that is in an understanding, choosing person. Certain it is, that infants may be given to God; and if they may be, they must be: for it is not here as in goods, where we are permitted to use all, or some, and give what portion we please out of them; but we cannot do our duty towards our children, unless we give them wholly to God, and offer them to his service and to his grace. The first does honour to God; the second does charity to the children. The effects and real advantages will appear in the sequel. In the mean time, this argument extends thus far, that children may be presented to God acceptably, in order to his service. And it was highly preceptive, when our blessed Saviour commanded, that we should "suffer little children to come to" him: and when they came, they carried away a blessing along with them. He was desirous they should partake of his merits: he is not willing, neither is it his Father's will, "that any of these little ones should perish." And, therefore, he died for them, and loved, and blessed them: and so he will now, if they be brought to him, and presented as candidates of the religion, and of the resurrection. Christ hath a blessing for our children; but let them come to him, that is, be presented at the doors of the church to the sacrament of adoption and initiation; for I know no other way for them to come.

[y] Sect. xxv. &c.

13. Secondly: Children may be adopted into the covenant of the gospel, that is, "made partakers of the communion of saints," which is the second effect of baptism; parts of the church, members of Christ's mystical body, and put into the order of eternal life. Now concerning this, it is certain the church clearly hath power to do her offices in order to it. The faithful can pray for all men, they can do their piety to some persons with more regard, and greater earnestness; they can admit whom they please, in their proper dispositions, to a participation of all their holy prayers, and communions, and preachings, and exhortations: and if all this be a blessing, and all this be the actions of our own charity, who can hinder the church of God from admitting infants to the communion of all their pious offices, which can do them benefit in their present capacity? How this does necessarily infer baptism, I shall afterwards discourse.[y] But, for the present, I enumerate, that the blessings of baptism are communicable to them; they may be admitted into a fellowship of all the prayers and privileges of the church, and the communion of saints, in blessings, and prayers, and holy offices. But that which is of greatest persuasion, and convincing efficacy, in this particular, is, that the children of the church are as capable of the same covenant as the children of the Jews: but it was the same covenant that circumcision did consign, a spiritual covenant under a veil, and now it is the same spiritual covenant without the veil; which is evident to him that considers it, thus:

14. The words of the covenant are these: "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect: I will multiply thee exceedingly: thou shalt be a father of many nations: thy name shall not be Abram, but Abraham: nations and kings shall be out of thee: I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee: and, I will give all the land of Canaan to thy seed: and, all the males shall be circumcised; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and thee: and, he that is not circumcised shall be cut off from his people."[z] The covenant which was on Abraham's part was, "To walk before God, and to be perfect;" on God's part, to bless him with a numerous issue, and them with the land of Canaan: and the sign was circumcision, the token of the covenant. Now, in all this there was no duty to which the posterity was obliged, nor any blessing which Abraham could perceive or feel, because neither he nor his posterity did enjoy the promise for many hundred years after the covenant: and therefore, as there was a duty for the posterity, which is not here expressed; so there was a blessing for Abraham, which was concealed under the leaves of a temporal promise, and which we shall better understand from them, whom the Spirit of God hath taught the mysteriousness of this transaction. The argument, indeed, and the observation, is wholly St. Paul's.[a] Abraham and the patriarchs "died in faith, not having received the promises," viz. of a possession in Canaan. "They saw the promises afar off," they embraced them, and looked through the cloud, and

[z] Gen. xvii. 1, &c. [a] Heb. xi. 13–16.

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the temporal veil: this was not it: they might have returned to Canaan, if that had been the object of their desires, and the design of the promise; but they desired and did seek a country, but it was a better, and that a heavenly. This was the object of their desire, and the end of their search, and the reward of their faith, and the secret of their promise. And therefore circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had before his circumcision,"[b] before the making this covenant; and therefore it must principally relate to an effect and a blessing greater than was afterwards expressed in the temporal promise: which effect was "forgiveness of sins, a not imputing to us our infirmities, justification by faith, accounting that for righteousness:" and these effects or graces were promised to Abraham, not only for his posterity after the flesh, but his children after the Spirit, even to all that shall believe, and "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he walked in, being yet uncircumcised."

15. This was no other but the covenant of the gospel, though afterwards otherwise consigned: for so the apostle expressly affirms, that Abraham was the father of circumcision, (viz. by virtue of this covenant,) "not only to them that are circumcised, but to all that believe:[c] for this promise was not through the law" of works, or of circumcision, "but of faith." And therefore, as St. Paul observes, God promised that Abraham should be a father, not of that nation only, but "of many nations, and the heir of the world; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ,"[d] that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. "And if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since, then, the covenant of the gospel is the covenant of faith, and not of works; and the promises are spiritual, not secular; and Abraham the father of the faithful gentiles as well as the circumcised Jews, and the heir of the world, not by himself, but by his seed, or the Son of man, our Lord Jesus; it follows, that the promises which circumcision did seal, were the same promises which are consigned in baptism: the covenant is the same, only that God's people are not impaled in Palestine, and the veil is taken away, and the temporal is passed into spiritual; and the result will be this, "That to as many persons, and in as many capacities, and in the same dispositions, as the promises were applied and did relate in circumcision, to the same they do belong and may be applied in baptism."[e] And let it be remembered, that the covenant which circumcision did sign, was a covenant of grace and faith; the promises were of the Spirit, or spiritual; it was made before the law, and could not be rescinded by the legal covenant; nothing could be added to it, or taken from it; and we that are partakers of this grace, are therefore partakers of it by being Christ's servants, united to Christ, and so are become Abraham's seed, as the apostle at large and professedly proves in divers places, but especially in the fourth to the Romans, and the third to the Galatians. And, therefore, if infants were then admitted to it, and consigned to it by a sacrament, which they understood not any more than ours do, there is not any reason why ours should not enter in at the ordinary gate and door of grace as well as they. Their children were circumcised the eighth day, but were instructed afterwards, when they could inquire what these things meant. Indeed, their proselytes were first taught, then circumcised; so are ours baptized: but their infants were consigned first; and so must ours.

16. Thirdly: In baptism we are born again; and this infants need in the present circumstances, and for the same great reason that men of age and reason do. For our natural birth is either of itself insufficient, or is made so by the fall of Adam, and the consequent evils, that nature alone, or our first birth, cannot bring us to heaven, which is a supernatural end, that is, an end above all the power of our nature as now it is. So that if nature cannot bring us to heaven, grace must, or we can never get thither; if the first birth cannot, a second must: but the second birth spoken of in Scripture is baptism; "a man must be born of water and the Spirit." And therefore baptism is λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, "the laver of a new birth."[f] Either then infants cannot go to heaven any way that we know of, or they must be baptized. To say they are to be left to God, is an excuse, and no answer; for when God hath opened the door, and calls that the "entrance into heaven," we do not leave them to God, when we will not carry them to him in the way which he hath described, and at the door which himself hath opened: we leave them indeed, but it is but helpless and destitute: and though God is better than man, yet that is no warrant to us; what it will be to the children, that we cannot warrant or conjecture. And if it be objected, that to the new birth are required dispositions of our own, which are to be wrought by and in them that have the use of reason; besides that this is wholly against the analogy of a new birth, in which the person to be born is wholly a passive, and hath put into him the principle, that in time will produce its proper actions, it is certain that they that can receive the new birth are capable of it. The effect of it is a possibility of being saved, and arriving to a supernatural felicity. If infants can receive this effect, then also the new birth, without which they cannot receive the effect. And if they can receive salvation, the effect of the new birth, what hinders them but they may receive that, that is in order to that effect, and ordained only for it, and which is nothing of itself, but in its institution and relation, and which may be received by the same capacity in which

[b] Rom. iv. 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12.
[c] Rom. iv. 11, 13, 17.
[d] Gal. iii. 14, 29.
[e] Οἱ τότοι ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ἦσαν, ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἡ περιτομὴ σαρκικὴ ὑπηρετήσασα χρόνῳ, ἕως τῆς μεγάλης περιτομῆς, τουτέστι τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῦ περιτέμνοντος ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ σφραγίσαντος ἡμᾶς εἰς ὄνομα Θεοῦ.—EPIPHAN. lib. i. Hæres. 8. scil. Epicureor.
[f] Titus iii. 5.

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one may be created, that is, a passivity, or a capacity obediential ?

17. Fourthly: Concerning pardon of sins, which is one great effect of baptism, it is certain that infants have not that benefit, which men of sin and age may receive. He that hath a sickly stomach, drinks wine, and it not only refreshes his spirits, but cures his stomach: he that drinks wine, and hath not that disease, receives good by his wine, though it does not minister to so many needs; it refreshes, though it does not cure him: and when oil is poured upon a man's head, it does not always heal a wound, but sometimes makes him a cheerful countenance, sometimes it consigns him to be a king, or a priest. So it is in baptism: it does not heal the wounds of actual sins, because they have not committed them; but it takes off the evil of original sin: whatsoever is imputed to us by Adam's prevarication, is washed off by the death of the second Adam,[g] into which we are baptized. But concerning original sin, because there are so many disputes which may intricate the question, I shall make use only of that, which is confessed on both sides, and material to our purpose. Death came upon all men by Adam's sin, and the necessity of it remains upon us, as an evil consequent of the disobedience. For though death is natural, yet it was kept off from man by God's favour; which, when he lost, the banks were broken, and the water reverted to its natural course, and our nature became a curse, and death a punishment. Now, that this also relates to infants so far, is certain, because they are sick, and die. This the Pelagians denied not.[h] But to whomsoever this evil descended, for them also a remedy is provided by the second Adam; "That as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, at the day of judgment: then death shall be destroyed. In the mean time, death hath a sting and a bitterness, a curse it is, and an express of the Divine anger; and if this sting be not taken away here, we shall have no participation of the final victory over death. Either, therefore, infants must be for ever without remedy in this evil consequent of their father's sin, or they must be adopted into the participation of Christ's death, which is the remedy. Now, how can they partake of Christ's death, but by baptism into his death? For if there be any spiritual way fancied, it will, by a stronger argument, admit them to baptism: for if they can receive spiritual effects, they can also receive the outward sacrament; this being denied only upon pretence they cannot have the other. If there be no spiritual way extraordinary, then the ordinary way is only left for them. If there be an extraordinary, let it be shown, and christians will be at rest concerning their children. One thing only I desire to be observed, that Pelagius denied original sin, but yet denied not the necessity of infants' baptism; and being accused of it, in an epistle to Pope Innocent the First, he purged himself of the suspicion, and allowed the practice, but denied the inducement of it: which shows, that their arts are weak that think baptism to be useless to infants, if they be not formally guilty of the prevarication of Adam. By which I also gather, that it was so universal, so primitive a practice, to baptize infants, that it was greater than all pretences to the contrary; for it would much have conduced to the introducing his opinion against grace and original sin, if he had destroyed that practice, which seemed so very much to have its greatest necessity from the doctrine he denied. But against Pelagius, and against all that follow the parts of his opinion, it is of good use which St. Austin, Prosper,[i] and Fulgentius argue; if infants are punished for Adam's sin, then they are also guilty of it in some sense. Nimis enim impium est hoc de Dei sentire justitiâ, quòd à prævaricatione liberos cum reis voluerit esse damnatos:" so Prosper. Dispendia quæ flentes nascendo testantur, dicito quo merito sub justissimo et omnipotentissimo judice eis, si nullum peccatum attrahant, arrogentur," said St. Austin. For the guilt of it signifies nothing but the obligation to the punishment; and he that feels the evil consequent to him the sin is imputed; not as to all the same dishonour, or moral accounts, but to the more material, to the natural account: and, in holy Scripture, the taking off the punishment is the pardon of the sin; and in the same degree the punishment is abolished, in the same God is appeased, and then the person stands upright, being reconciled to God by his grace. Since, therefore, infants have the punishment of sin, it is certain the sin is imputed to them; and, therefore, they need being reconciled to God by Christ: and if so, then, when they are baptized into Christ's death, and into his resurrection, their sins are pardoned, because the punishment is taken off, the sting of natural death is taken away, because God's anger is removed, and they shall partake of Christ's resurrection; which because baptism does signify and consign, they also are to be baptized. To which also add this appendant consideration, that whatsoever the sacraments do consign, that also they do convey and minister: they do it, that is, God by them does it, lest we should think the sacraments to be mere illusions, and abusing us by deceitful ineffective signs: and, therefore, to infants the grace of a title to a resurrection and reconciliation to God, by the death of Christ, is conveyed, because it signifies and consigns this to them more to the life and analogy of resemblance, than circumcision to the infant sons of Israel. I end this consideration with the words of Nazianzen: Ἡ γέννησις ἐκ βαπτίσματος πᾶν ἀπὸ γενέσεως κάλυμμα περιτέμνει, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἄνω ζωὴν ἐπανάγει· "Our birth, by baptism, does cut off every unclean appendage of our natural birth, and leads us to a celestial life."[k] And this, in children, is therefore more necessary, because the evil came upon them without their own act of reason and choice, and, therefore, the grace and remedy ought not to stay the leisure of dull nature, and the formalities of the civil law.

[g] Rom. v. 17, 18.
[h] Vide Aug. lib. iv. contra Duas Epistolas Pælag. c. 4. lib. 6. contra Jur. cap. 4.
[i] Prosper contra Collatorem, c. 20.
[k] Orat. 40. de Baptis.

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18. Fifthly: The baptism of infants does to them the greatest part of that benefit, which belongs to the remission of sins; for baptism is a state of repentance and pardon for ever. This I suppose to be already proved; to which I only add this caution, that the Pelagians, to undervalue the necessity of supervening grace, affirmed, that baptism did minister to us grace sufficient to live perfectly, and without sin for ever. Against this St. Jerome sharply declaims, and affirms, "Baptismum præterita donare peccata, non futuram servare justitiam;"[l] that is, "non statim justum facit et omni plenum justitiâ," as he expounds his meaning in another place.[m] "Vetera peccata conscindit, novas virtutes non tribuit; dimittit à carcere, et dimisso, si laboraverit, præmia pollicetur." Baptism does not so forgive future sins, that we may do what we please, or so as we need not labour, and watch, and fear, perpetually, and make use of God's grace to actuate our endeavours; but puts us into a state of pardon, that is, in a covenant of grace, in which so long as we labour and repent, and strive to do our duty, so long our infirmities are pitied, and our sins certain to be pardoned, upon their certain conditions; that is, by virtue of it we are capable of pardon, and must work for it, and may hope it. And therefore infants have a most certain capacity and proper disposition to baptism: for sin creeps before it can go; and little indecencies are soon learned, and malice is before their years, and they can do mischief and irregularities betimes; and though we know not when, nor how far, they are imputed in every month of their lives, yet it is an admirable art of the Spirit of grace, to put them into a state of pardon, that their remedy may at least be as soon as their necessity: and therefore Tertullian and Gregory Nazianzen advised the baptism of children to be at three or four years of age; meaning, that they then begin to have little inadvertencies and hasty follies, and actions so evil as did need a lavatory. But if baptism hath an influence upon sins in the succeeding portions of our life, then it is certain, that their being presently innocent does not hinder, and ought not to retard, the sacrament: and therefore Tertullian's, "Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum?"[n] What need innocents hasten to the remission of sins?" is soon answered. It is true, they need not in respect of any actual sins; for so they are innocent: but in respect of the evils of their nature derived from their original, and in respect of future sins in the whole state of their life, it is necessary they be put into a state of pardon before they sin; because some sin early, some sin later; and therefore, unless they be baptized so early as to prevent the first sins, they may chance die in a sin, to a pardon of which they have yet derived no title from Christ.

19. Sixthly: The next great effect of baptism which children can have, is the spirit of sanctification; and if they can be "baptized with water and the Spirit," it will be sacrilege to rob them of so holy treasures. And concerning this, although it be with them as St. Paul says of heirs, "The heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;" and children, although they receive the Spirit of promise, and the Spirit of grace, yet in respect of actual exercise they differ not from them that have them not at all: yet this hinders not, but they may have them. For as the reasonable soul and all its faculties are in children, will and understanding, passions, and powers of attraction and propulsion; yet these faculties do not operate or come abroad, till time and art, observation and experience, have drawn them forth into action: so may the Spirit of grace, the principle of christian life, be infused, and yet lie without action, till, in its own day, it is drawn forth. For in every christian there are three parts concurring to his integral constitution, body, and soul, and spirit; and all these have their proper activities and times; but "every one in his own order, first that which is natural, then that which is spiritual." And what Aristotle said, "A man first lives the life of a plant, then of a beast, and lastly of a man," is true in this sense: and the more spiritual the principle is, the longer it is before it operates, because more things concur to spiritual actions than to natural: and these are necessary, and therefore first; the other are perfect, and therefore last. And who is he that so well understands the philosophy of this third principle of a christian's life, the Spirit, as to know how or when it is infused, and how it operates in all its periods, and what it is in its being and proper nature; and whether it be like the soul, or like the faculty, or like a habit; or how, or to what purposes, God, in all varieties, does dispense it? These are secrets, which none but bold people use to decree, and build propositions upon their own dreams. That which is certain is, That the Spirit is the principle of a new life, or a new birth: That baptism is the laver of this new birth: That it is the seed of God, and may lie long in the furrows before it springs up: That from the faculty to the act, the passage is not always sudden and quick: That the Spirit is "the earnest of our inheritance," that is, of resurrection to eternal life; which inheritance, because children we hope shall have, they cannot be denied to have its seal and earnest; that is, if they shall have all, they are not to be denied a part. That children have some effects of the Spirit, and therefore do receive it, and are "baptized with the Spirit," and therefore may with water; which thing is therefore true and evident, because some children are sanctified, as Jeremiah and the Baptist, and therefore all may. And because all sanctification of persons is an effect of the Holy Ghost, there is no peradventure but they, that can be sanctified by God, can, in that capacity, receive the Holy Ghost. And all the ground of dissenting here, is only upon a mistake; because infants do no act of holiness, they suppose them incapable of the grace of sanctification. Now sanctification of children is their adoption to the inheritance of sons, their presentation to Christ, their consignation to Christ's service and to resurrection, their

[l] Lib. iii. adv. Pelag. [m] Lib. i. in initio. [n] Lib. de Baptis. c. 18.

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being put into a possibility of being saved, their restitution to God's favour, which naturally, that is, as our nature is depraved and punished, they could not have. And in short the case is this. Original righteousness was in Adam after the manner of nature, but it was an act or effect of grace; and by it men were not made, but born, righteous. The inferior faculties obeyed the superior, the mind was whole and right, and conformable to the Divine image, the reason and the will always concurring, the will followed reason, and reason followed the laws of God;[o] and so long as a man had not lost this, he was pleasing to God, and should have passed to a more perfect state. Now because this, if Adam had stood, should have been born with every child, there was in infants a principle, which was the seed of holy life here, and a blessed hereafter; and yet the children should have gone in the road of nature then as well as now, and the Spirit should have operated at nature's leisure; God, being the giver of both, would have made them instrumental to and perfective of each other, but not destructive. Now, what was lost by Adam[p] is restored by Christ; the same righteousness, only it is not born, but superinduced; not integral, but interrupted; but such as it is, there is no difference, but that the same or the like principle may be derived to us from Christ, as there should have been from Adam, that is, a principle of obedience, a regularity of faculties, a beauty in the soul, and a state of acceptation with God. And we see also in men of understanding and reason, "the Spirit of God dwells in them," which Tatianus describing, uses these words: ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ὥσπερ ἔνασμα τῆς δυνάμεως ἀυτοῦ [Πνεύματος] κεκτημένη, "The soul is possessed with sparks, or materials, of the power of the Spirit;" and yet it is sometimes ineffective and unactive, sometimes more, sometimes less, and does no more do its work at all times, than the soul does at all times understand. Add to this, that if there be in infants naturally an evil principle, a proclivity to sin, an ignorance and pravity of mind, a disorder of affections, (as experience teacheth us there is, and the perpetual doctrine of the church, and the universal mischiefs issuing from mankind, and the sin of every man, does witness too much,) why cannot infants have a good principle in them, though it works not till its own season, as well as an evil principle? If there were not, by nature, some evil principle, it is not possible that all the world should choose sin. In free agents it was never heard, that all individuals loved and chose the same thing, to which they were not naturally inclined. Neither do all men choose to marry, neither do all choose to abstain; and in this instance there is a natural inclination to one part. But of all the men and women in the world, there is no one that hath never sinned: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"[q] said an apostle. If, therefore, nature hath in infants an evil principle, which operates when the child can choose, but is all the while within the soul; either infants have by grace a principle put into them, or else "sin abounds, where grace does not super-abound," expressly against the doctrine of the apostle. The event of this discourse is, That if infants be capable of the Spirit of grace, there is no reason but they may and ought to be baptized, as well as men and women; unless God had expressly forbidden them, which cannot be pretended: and that infants are capable of the Spirit of grace, I think is made very credible. "Christus infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes," said Irenæus; "Christ became an infant among the infants, and does sanctify infants:"[r] and St. Cyprian affirms, "Esse apud omnes, sive infantes sive majores natu, unam divini muneris æquitatem: There is the same dispensation of the Divine grace to all alike, to infants as well as to men." And in this royal priesthood, as it is in the secular, kings may be anointed in their cradles. "Dat (Deus) sui Spiritûs occultissimam gratiam, quam etiam latenter infundit in parvulis:[s] God gives the most secret grace of his Spirit, which he also secretly infuses into infants." And if a secret infusion be rejected, because it cannot be proved at the place and at the instant, many men, that hope for heaven, will be very much to seek for a proof of their earnest, and need an earnest of the earnest. For all that have the Spirit of God, cannot in all instants prove it, or certainly know it: neither is it defined, by how many indices the Spirit's presence can be proved or signified. And they limit the Spirit too much, and understand it too little, who take accounts of his secret workings, and measure them by the material lines and methods of natural and animal effects. And yet, because whatsoever is holy, is made so by the Holy Spirit, we are certain that the children of believing, that is, of christian parents, are holy. St. Paul affirmed it, and by it hath distinguished ours from the children of unbelievers, and our marriages from theirs. And because the children of the heathen, when they come to choice and reason, may enter into baptism and the covenant, if they will; our children have no privilege beyond the children of Turks or heathens, unless it be in the present capacity, that is, either by receiving the Holy Ghost immediately, and the promises, or at least having a title to the sacrament, and entering by that door. If they have the Spirit, nothing can hinder them from a title to the water; and if they have only a title to the water of the sacrament, then they shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, the benefits of the sacrament: else their privilege is none at all, but a dish of cold water, which every village nurse can provide for her new-born babe.

20. But it is in our case, as it was with the Jews' children: our children are a holy seed; for if it

[o] Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀρχῆθεν ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν ἀνοήτως ἐξολισθήσασαν ἡ πολυπαθεστάτη ζωὴ διαδέχεται, καὶ τοῦ φθοροποιοῦ θανάτου πέρας.—DIONYS. AREOP. Eccles. Hier. c. 3. par. 3.

[p] Ut quod perdideramus in Adam, i. e. secundùm imaginem et similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Jesu Christo reciperemus.—IRENÆUS, lib. iii. c. 30.

[q] 1 John i. 8.

[r] Ep. ad Fiden. lib. iii. ep. 8.

[s] S. Aug. lib. de Pec. Mer. et Remiss. c. 9.

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were not so with christianity, how could St. Peter move the Jews to christianity, by telling them "the promise was to them and their children?" For if our children be not capable of the Spirit of promise and holiness, and yet their children were holy, it had been a better argument to have kept them in the synagogue, than to have called them to the christian church. Either therefore, 1. There is some holiness in a reasonable nature, which is not from the Spirit of holiness; or else, 2. Our children do receive the Holy Spirit, because they are holy; or if they be not holy, they are in worse condition under Christ than under Moses: or if none of all this be true, then our children are holy by having received the Holy Spirit of promise; and, consequently, nothing can hinder them from being baptized.

21. And, indeed, if the christian Jews, whose children are circumcised, and made partakers of the same promises, and title, and inheritance, and sacraments, which themselves had at their conversion to the faith of Christ, had seen their children now shut out from these new sacraments, it is not to be doubted, but they would have raised a storm greater than could easily have been suppressed, since about their circumcisions they had raised such tragedies and implacable disputations. And there had been great reason to look for a storm; for their children were circumcised, and if not baptized, then they were left under a burden, which their fathers were quit of; for St. Paul said, "Whosoever is circumcised, is a debtor to keep the whole law." These children, therefore, that were circumcised, stood obliged, for want of baptism, to perform the law of ceremonies, to be presented into the temple, to pay their price, to be redeemed with silver and gold, to be bound by the law of pollutions and carnal ordinances; and therefore, if they had been thus left, it would be no wonder, if the Jews had complained and made a tumult: they used to do it for less matters.

22. To which let this be added: That the first book of the New Testament was not written till eight years after Christ's ascension, and St. Mark's Gospel twelve years. In the mean time, to what scriptures did they appeal? By the analogy or proportion of what writings did they end their questions? Whence did they prove their articles? They only appealed to the Old Testament, and only added what their Lord superadded. Now, either it must be said, that our blessed Lord commanded that infants should not be baptized, which is no where pretended; and if it were, cannot at all be proved: or, if by the proportion of scriptures they did serve God, and preach the religion, it is plain, that by the analogy of the Old Testament, that is, of those scriptures by which they proved Christ to be come and to have suffered, they also approved the baptism of infants, or the admitting them to the society of the faithful Jews, of which also the church did then principally consist.

23. Seventhly: That baptism, which consigns men and women to a blessed resurrection, doth also equally consign infants to it, hath nothing, that I know of, pretended against it; there being the same signature and the same grace, and in this thing all being alike passive, and we no way co-operating to the consignation and promise of grace. And infants have an equal necessity, as being liable to sickness and groaning with as sad accents, and dying sooner than men and women, and less able to complain, and more apt to be pitied, and broken with the unhappy consequents of a short life and a speedy death, "et infelicitate priscorum hominum," with the infelicity and folly of their first parents; and therefore have as great need as any: and that is capacity enough to receive a remedy for the evil, which was brought upon them by the fault of another.

24. Eighthly: And after all this, if baptism be that means, which God hath appointed to save us, it were well, if we would do our parts towards infants' final interest: which, whether it depends upon the sacrament and its proper grace, we have nothing to rely upon but those texts of Scripture, which make baptism the ordinary way of entering into the state of salvation: save only we are to add this, that because of this law, since infants are not personally capable, but the church for them, as for all others indefinitely, we have reason to believe, that their friends' neglect shall by some way be supplied; but hope hath in it nothing beyond a probability. This we may be certain of, that naturally we cannot be heirs of salvation, for "by nature we are children of wrath;" and therefore an eternal separation from God is an infallible consequent to our evil nature: either, therefore, children must be put into the state of grace, or they shall dwell for ever where God's face does never shine. Now there are but two ways of being put into the state of grace and salvation, the inward by the Spirit, and the outward by water; which regularly are together. If they be renewed by the Spirit, "what hinders them to be baptized, who receive the Holy Ghost as well as we?" If they are not capable of the Spirit, they are capable of water; and if of neither, where is their title to heaven,[t] which is neither internal nor external, neither spiritual nor sacramental, neither secret nor manifest, neither natural nor gracious, neither original nor derivative? And well may we lament the death of poor babes, that are ἄβαπτοι, concerning whom, if we neglect what is regularly prescribed to all that enter heaven, without any difference expressed or case reserved, we have no reason to be comforted over our dead children, but may "weep as they that have no hope." We may hope when our neglect was not the hinderance, because God hath wholly taken the matter into his own hand, and then it cannot miscarry; and though we know nothing of the children, yet we know much of God's goodness: but when God hath permitted it to us, that is, offered and permitted children to our ministry, whatever happens to the innocents, we may well fear, lest God will require the souls at our hands: and we cannot be otherwise secure, but that it will be said concerning our children, which St. Ambrose

[t] Nisi quis renatus fuerit, &c. Utique nullum excipit, non infantem, non aliquâ præventum necessitate.—AMBR. de Abrah. Patr. lib. ii. c. 11.

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used in a case like this: "Anima illa potuit salva fieri, si habuisset purgationem:[u] This soul might have gone to God, if it had been purified and washed." We know God is good, infinitely good; but we know it is not at all good to tempt his goodness: and he tempts him that leaves the usual way, and pretends it is not made for him, and yet hopes to be at his journey's end, or expects to meet his child in heaven, when himself shuts that door against him, which, for aught he knows, is the only one that stands open. St. Austin was severe in this question against unbaptized infants; therefore he is called, "durus pater infantum;" though I know not why the original of that opinion should be attributed to him, since St. Ambrose said the same before him, as appears in his words before quoted.

25. And now that I have enumerated the blessings which are consequent to baptism, and have also made apparent, that infants can receive these blessings, I suppose I need not use any other persuasions to bring children to baptism. If it be certain they may receive these good things by it, it is certain they are not to be hindered of them, without the greatest impiety, and sacrilege, and uncharitableness in the world. Nay, if it be only probable that they receive these blessings, or if it be but possible they may, nay, unless it be impossible they should, and so declared by revelation or demonstratively certain; it were intolerable unkindness and injustice to our pretty innocents to let their crying be unpitied, and their natural misery eternally irremediable, and their sorrows without remedy, and their souls no more capable of relief than their bodies of physic, and their death left with the sting in, and their souls without spirits to go to God, and no angel-guardian to be assigned them in the assemblies of the faithful, and they not to be reckoned in the accounts of God and God's church. All these are sad stories.

26. There are in Scripture very many other probabilities to persuade the baptism of infants; but because the places admit of divers interpretations, the arguments have so many diminutions, and the certainty that is in them is too fine for easy understandings, I have chosen to build the ancient doctrines upon such principles, which are more easy and certain, and have not been yet sullied and rifled with the contentions of an adversary. This only I shall observe, that the words of our blessed Lord, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," cannot be expounded to the exclusion of children, but the same expositions will also make baptism not necessary for men: for if they be both necessary ingredients, water and the Spirit, then let us provide water, and God will provide the Spirit; if we bring wood to the sacrifice, he will provide a lamb. And if they signify distinctly, one is ordinarily as necessary as the other; and then infants must be baptized, or not be saved. But if one be exegetical and explicative of the other, and by "water and the Spirit" is meant only the purification of the Spirit, then where is the necessity of baptism for men? It will be, as the other sacrament, at most but highly convenient, not simply necessary; and all the other places will easily be answered, if this be avoided. But, however, these words being spoken in so decretory a manner, are to be used with fear and reverence; and we must be infallibly sure, by some certain infallible arguments, that infants ought not to be baptized, or we ought to fear concerning the effect of these decretory words. I shall only add two things, by way of corollary to this discourse.

27. That the church of God, ever since her numbers were full, hath, for very many ages, consisted almost wholly of assemblies of them, who have been baptized in their infancy: and although, in the first callings of the gentiles, the chiefest and most frequent baptisms were of converted and repenting persons and believers; yet, from the beginning also, the church hath baptized the infants of christian parents; according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, I will lift up my hands to the gentiles, and set up a standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."[x] Concerning which I shall not only bring the testimonies of the matter of fact, but either a report of an apostolical tradition, or some argument from the fathers, which will make their testimony more effectual in all that shall relate to the question.

28. The author of the book of ecclesiastical hierarchy, attributed to St. Denis the Areopagite, takes notice, that certain unholy persons and enemies to the christian religion think it a ridiculous thing, that infants, who as yet cannot understand the Divine mysteries, should be partakers of the sacraments; and that professions and abrenunciations should be made by others for them and in their names. He answers, that "Holy men, governors of churches, have so taught, having received a tradition from their fathers and elders in Christ." By which answer of his, as it appears that he himself was later than the Areopagite; so it is so early by him affirmed, that even then there was an ancient tradition for the baptism of infants, and the use of godfathers in the ministry of the sacrament. Concerning which, it having been so ancient a constitution of the church, it were well if men would rather humbly and modestly observe, than, like scorners, deride it; in which they show their own folly, as well as immodesty. For what indecency or incongruity is it, that our parents, natural or spiritual, should stipulate for us, when it is agreeable to the practice of all the laws and transactions of the world, an effect of the communion of saints, and of christian economy? For why may not infants be stipulated for, as well as we? All were included in the stipulation made with Adam; he made a losing bargain for himself, and we smarted for his folly: and if the faults of parents, and kings, and relatives, do bring evil upon their children, and subjects, and correlatives, it is but equal, that our children may have benefit also by our charity and piety. But concerning making an agreement for them, we find that God

[u] Lib. ii. c. 11. de Abrah. Patriarc.

[x] Isa. xlix. 22.

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was confident concerning Abraham, that "he would teach his children:" and there is no doubt but parents have great power, by strict education and prudent discipline, to efform the minds of their children to virtue. Joshua did expressly undertake for his household: "I and my house will serve the Lord." And for children we may better do it, because, till they are of perfect choice, no government in the world is so great as that of parents over their children, in that which can concern the parts of this question; for they rule over their understandings, and children know nothing but what they are told, and they believe it infinitely. And it is a rare art of the Spirit, to engage parents to bring them up well, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and they are persons obliged by a superinduced band; they are to give them instructions and holy principles, as they give them meat. And it is certain, that parents may better stipulate for their children, than the church can for men and women: for they may be present impostors and hypocrites, as the church story tells of some, and consequently are παραβαπτίσται, not really converted, and ineffectually baptized; and, the next day, they may change their resolution, and grow weary of their vow. And that is the most that children can do, when they come to age; and it is very much in the parents, whether the children shall do any such thing or no.

> ——— purus et insons
> (Ut me collaudem,) si vivo et charus amicis,
> Causa fuit Pater his ———
> Ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnes
> Circum doctores aderat. Quid multa? pudicum
> (Qui primus virtutis honos) servavit ab omni
> Non solùm facto, verùm opprobrio quoque turpi:
> ——— ob hoc nunc
> Laus illi debetur, et à me gratia major.[y]

For education can introduce a habit and a second nature, against which children cannot kick, unless they do some violence to themselves and their inclinations. And although it fails too often whenever it fails, yet we pronounce prudently concerning future things, when we have a less influence into the event than in the present case, (and, therefore, are more unapt persons to stipulate,) and less reason in the thing itself (and therefore have not so much reason to be confident). Is not the greatest prudence of generals instanced in their foreseeing future events, and guessing at the designs of their enemies? concerning which they have less reason to be confident, than parents of their children's belief of the christian creed. To which I add this consideration: That parents or godfathers may therefore safely and prudently promise, that their children shall be of the christian faith; because we not only see millions of men and women, who believe the whole creed only upon the stock of their education, but there are none that ever do renounce the faith of their country and breeding, unless they be violently tempted by interest or weakness, antecedent or consequent. He that sees all men almost to be christians, because they are bid to be so, needs not question the fittingness of godfathers promising in behalf of the children, for whom they answer.

29. And however the matter be for godfathers, yet the tradition of baptizing infants passed through the hands of Irenæus: "Omnem ætatem sanctificans per illam quæ ad ipsam erat similitudinem. Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis parvulus,"[z] &c. "Christ did sanctify every age by his own susception of it, and similitude to it. For he came to save all men by himself; I say, all who by him are born again unto God, infants, and children, and boys, and young men, and old men. He was made an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; a little one to the little ones," &c. And Origen is express: "Ecclesia traditionem ab apostolis suscepit etiam parvulis dare baptismum;[a] The church hath received a tradition from the apostles, to give baptism to children." And St. Cyprian, in his epistle to Fidus, gives account of this article; for being questioned by some less skilful persons, whether it were lawful to baptize children before the eighth day, he gives account of the whole question: and a whole council of sixty-six bishops, upon very good reason, decreed, that their baptism should at no hand be deferred; though whether six, or eight, or ten days, was no matter, so there be no danger or present necessity. The whole epistle is worth the reading.

30. But besides these authorities of such, who writ before the starting of the Pelagian questions, it will not be useless to bring the discourses of them and others, I mean the reason upon which the church did it both before and after.

31. Irenæus's argument was this:[a] Christ took upon him our nature, to sanctify and to save it; and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death, which is the symbol and effect of old age; and therefore it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should he be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their persons, and the saving of their souls by their infant Lord and elder Brother?

32. Omnis enim anima eousque in Adam censetur, donec in Christo recenseatur; tamdiu immunda, quamdiu recenseatur:"[b] Every soul is accounted in Adam, till it be new accounted in Christ; and so long as it is accounted in Adam, so long it is unclean; and we know, "no unclean thing can enter into heaven;" and therefore our Lord hath defined it, "Unless ye be born of water and the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be holy. It was the argument of Tertullian:[c] which the rather is to be received, because he was one less favourable to the custom of the church, in his time, of baptizing infants, which cus-

[y] Horat. lib. i. Sat. 6.
[z] Lib. ii. c. 39. V. etiam Constitut. Clementis. βαπτίζετε δὲ ὑμῶν, καὶ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ θεοῦ.
[a] Lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6. Idem Hom. 14. in Lucam, et lib. 8. Hom. 8. in Levitic.
[a] Irenæus. [b] Tertullian. [c] Lib. de Anima, c. 39. et 42.

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tom he noted and acknowledged, and hath also, in the preceding discourse, fairly proved. And indeed, (that St. Cyprian[d] may superadd his symbol,) "God, who is no accepter of persons, will also be no accepter of ages. For if to the greatest delinquents, sinning long before against God, remission of sins be given, when afterwards they believe, and from baptism and from grace no man is forbidden; how much more ought not an infant be forbidden, who, being new born, hath sinned nothing, save only that being in the flesh, born of Adam, in his first birth he hath contracted the contagion of an old death! who therefore comes the easier to obtain remission of sins, because to him are forgiven not his own, but the sins of another man. None ought to be driven from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful, and gentle, and pious unto all; and therefore much less infants, who more deserve our aid, and more need the Divine mercy, because, in the first beginning of their birth, crying and weeping, they can do nothing but call for mercy and relief." "For this reason it was," saith Origen,[e] "that they, to whom the secrets of the Divine mysteries were committed, did baptize their infants, because there were born with them the impurities of sin," which did need material ablution, as a sacrament of spiritual purification. For that it may appear, that our sins have a proper analogy to this sacrament, the body itself is called the "body of sin:" and therefore the washing of the body is not ineffectual towards the great work of pardon and abolition. Indeed, after this ablution there remains concupiscence, or the material part of our misery and sin; for Christ, by his death, only took away that which, when he did die for us, he bare in his own body upon the tree. Now Christ only bare the punishment of our sin, and therefore we shall not die for it; but the material part of the sin Christ bare not: sin could not come so near him; it might make him sick and die, but not disordered and stained. He was pure from original and actual sins; and therefore that remains in the body, though the guilt and punishment be taken off, and changed into advantages and grace; and the actual are relieved by the Spirit of grace descending afterwards upon the church, and sent by our Lord to the same purpose.

33. But it is not rationally to be answered what St. Ambrose says,[f] "Quia omnis peccato obnoxia, ideo omnis ætas sacramento idonea:" for it were strange that sin and misery should seize upon the innocent and most unconsenting persons; and that they only should be left without a sacrament, and an instrument of expiation. And although they cannot consent to the present susception, yet neither do they refuse; and yet they consent as much to the grace of the sacrament as to the prevarication of Adam; and because they suffer under this, it were but reason they should be relieved by that. And "it were better," as Gregory Nazianzen affirms,[g] "that they should be consigned and sanctified without their own knowledge, than to die without their being sanctified;" for so it happened to the circumcised babes of Israel: and if the conspersion and washing the door-posts with the blood of a lamb did sacramentally preserve all the first-born of Goshen; it cannot be thought impossible or unreasonable, that the want of understanding in children should hinder them from the blessing of a sacrament, and from being redeemed and washed with the blood of the Holy Lamb, "who was slain for all from the beginning of the world."

34. After all this, it is not inconsiderable, that we say the church hath great power and authority about the sacraments; which is observable in many instances. She appointed what persons she pleased, and in equal power made an unequal dispensation and ministry. The apostles first dispensed all things, and then they left off exterior ministries to attend to "the word of God and prayer:" and St. Paul accounted it no part of his office to baptize, when he had been separated by imposition of hands at Antioch to the work of preaching and greater ministries; and accounted that act of the church the act of Christ, saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." They used various forms in the ministration of baptism; sometimes baptizing "in the name of Christ," sometimes expressly invocating the holy and ever-blessed Trinity; one while, "I baptize thee," as in the Latin church, but in the Greek, "Let the servant of Christ be baptized." And, in all ecclesiastical ministries, the church invented the forms, and in most things hath often changed them, as in absolution, excommunication. And sometimes they baptized people under their profession of repentance, and then taught them; as it happened to the gaoler and his family; in whose case there was no explicit faith aforehand in the mysteries of religion, so far as appears; and yet he, and not only he, but all his house, were baptized at that hour of the night when the earthquake was terrible, and the fear was pregnant upon them; and this upon their master's account, as it is likely: but others were baptized in the conditions of a previous faith, and a new-begun repentance.[h] They baptized in rivers or in lavatories, by dipping or by sprinkling: for so we find that St. Laurence did, as he went to martyrdom; and so the church did sometimes to clinics; and so it is highly convenient to be done in northern countries; according to the prophecy of Isaiah,[i] "So shall he sprinkle many nations," according as the typical expiations among the Jews were usually by sprinkling. And it is fairly relative to the mystery, to the "sprinkling with the blood of Christ,"[k] and the watering of the furrows of our souls with the dew of heaven, to make them to bring forth fruit unto the Spirit and unto holiness.[l] The church sometimes dipt the catechumen three times, some-

[d] S. Cyprian, ep. ad Fidum.
[e] Origen, lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6.
[f] S. Ambros. de Abraham. Patriar. lib. ii. c. 11.
[g] Greg. Naz. Κρεῖσσον γὰρ ἀναισθήτως ἁγιασθῆναι, ἢ ἀπελθεῖν ἀσφράγιστα καὶ ἀτέλεστα.—Orat. xl. in S. Bapt.

[h] Non ut delinquere desinant, sed quia desierunt, as Tertul. phraseth it.
[i] Isaiah lii. 15.
[k] 1 Peter i. 2.
[l] Aqua refectionis, et baptismi lavacrum, quo anima sterilis ariditate peccati ad bonos fructus inferendos divinis muneribus irrigatur.—CASSIODOR. m. xxiii. ps. 2.

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times but once.[m] Some churches use fire in their baptisms; so do the Ethiopians; and the custom was ancient in some places. And so in the other sacrament: sometimes they stood, and sometimes kneeled; and sometimes received it in the mouth, and sometimes in the hand; one while in leavened, another while in unleavened bread: sometimes the wine and water were mingled, sometimes they were pure; and they admitted some persons to it sometimes, which at other times they rejected: sometimes the consecration was made by one form, sometimes by another: and, to conclude, sometimes it was given to infants, sometimes not. And she had power so to do; for in all things, where there was not a commandment of Christ, expressed or implied in the nature and in the end of the institution, the church had power to alter the particulars as was most expedient, or conducing to edification. And although the after-ages of the church, which refused to communicate infants, have found some little things against the lawfulness, and those ages that used it found out some pretences for its necessity; yet both the one and the other had liberty to follow their own necessities, so in all things they followed Christ. Certainly there is infinitely more reason, why infants may be communicated, than why they may not be baptized. And, that this discourse may revert to its first intention, although there is no record extant of any church in the world, which, from the apostles' days inclusively to this very day, ever refused to baptize their children; yet if they had upon any present reason, they might also change their practice, when the reason should be changed: and therefore, if there were nothing else in it, yet the universal practice of all churches, in all ages, is abundantly sufficient to determine us, and to legitimate the practice, since Christ hath not forbidden it. It is a sufficient confutation to disagreeing people, to use the words of St. Paul, "We have no such custom, nor the churches of God," to suffer children to be strangers from the covenant of promise, till they shall enter into it as Jews or Turks may enter; that is, by choice and disputation. But although this alone, to modest and obedient, that is, to christian spirits, be sufficient; yet this is more than the question did need: it can stand upon its proper foundation.

"Quicunque parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, anathema esto.[n] He that refuseth to baptize his infants, shall be in danger of the council."

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who, in thine own person, wert pleased to sanctify the waters of baptism, and, by thy institution and commandment, didst make them effectual to excellent purposes of grace and remedy; be pleased to verify the holy effects of baptism to me and all thy servants, whose names are dedicated to thee in an early and timely presentation, and enable us with thy grace to verify all our promises, by which we were bound then, when thou didst first make us thy own portion and relatives in the consummation of a holy covenant. O be pleased to pardon all those indecencies and unhandsome interruptions of that state of favour, in which thou didst plant us by thy grace, and admit us by the gates of baptism: and let that Spirit, which moved upon those holy waters, never be absent from us, but call upon us, and invite us, by a perpetual argument and daily solicitations and inducements to holiness; that we may never return to the filthiness of sin, but, by the answer of a good conscience, may please thee, and glorify thy name, and do honour to thy religion and institution in this world, and may receive the blessings and the rewards of it in the world to come, being presented to thee pure and spotless in the day of thy power, when thou shalt lead thy church to a kingdom and endless glories. Amen.

APPENDIX AD SECT. IX. No. 3. OF JESUS BEING BAPTIZED.

Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.[a]

[m] Ἔνιοι ὠτὰ τα τῶν σφραγισαμένων κατεσημήναντο, dixit Heracleon apud Clem. Alex. [n] Conc. Milevit. can. 2.

[a] Hanc orationem transcripsit et transmisit eruditissimus vir, et linguarum Orientalium apprimè gnarus, Dud. Loftus, J. U. D. et Jur. Civil. Prof. publicus in Acad. Dublin. apud Hibernos, professor linguarum Orientalium apud eosdem.

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Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.

O Father, according to the good pleasure of thy will, I am made a man; and from the time, in which I was born of a virgin, unto this day, I have finished those things which are agreeing to the nature of man; and, with due observance, have performed all thy commandments, the mysteries and types of the law: and now truly I am baptized; and so have I ordained baptism, that from thence, as from the place of spiritual birth, the regeneration of men may be accomplished: and as John was the last of the legal priests, so am I the first of the evangelical. Thou therefore, O Father, by the mediation of my prayer, open the heavens, and from thence send thy Holy Spirit upon this womb of baptism; that as he did untie the womb of the virgin, and thence form me, so also he would loose this baptismal womb, and so sanctify it unto men, that from thence new men may be begotten, who may become thy sons, and my brethren, and heirs of thy kingdom. And what the priests under the law, until John, could not do, grant unto the priests of the New Testament, (whose chief I am in the oblation of this prayer,) that whensoever they shall celebrate baptism, or pour forth prayers unto thee, as the Holy Spirit is seen with me in open vision, so also it may be made manifest, that the same Spirit will adjoin himself in their society a more secret way, and will by them perform the ministries of the New Testament, for which I am made a man; and as the high priest, I do offer these prayers in thy sight.

This prayer was transcribed out of the Syriac Catena, upon the third chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and is, by the author of that Catena, reported to have been made by our blessed Saviour immediately before the opening of the heavens at his baptism: and that the Holy Spirit did descend upon him while he was thus praying: and for it he cites the authority of St. Philoxenus. I cannot but foresee, that there is one clause in it, which will be used as an objection against the authority of this prayer; viz. "as John was the last of the legal priests;" for he was no priest at all, nor ever officiated in the temple, or at the Mosaic rites. But this is nothing: because, that the Baptist was of the family of the priests, his father Zachary is a demonstration; that he did not officiate, his being employed in another ministry is a sufficient answer; that he was the last of the priests is to be understood in this sense, that he was the period of the law, the common term between the law and the gospel: by him the gospel was first preached solemnly, and therefore in him the law first ended. And as he was the last of the prophets, so he was the last of the priests: not but that, after him, many had the gift of prophecy, and some did officiate in the Mosaical priesthood; but that his office put the first period to the solemnity of Moses's law; that is, at him the dispensation evangelical did first enter.

That the ministers of the gospel are here called priests, ought not to be a prejudice against this prayer in the persuasions of any men; because it was usual with our blessed Saviour to retain the words of the Jews, his countrymen, before whom he spake, that they might, by words to which they were used, be instructed in the notice of persons and things, offices and ministries evangelical, which afterwards were to be represented under other, that is, under their proper names.

And now all that I shall say of it is this: 1. That it is not unlikely but our blessed Saviour prayed, when he was baptized, and when the Holy Ghost descended upon him; not only because it was an employment symbolical to the grace he was to receive, but also to become to us a precedent by what means we are to receive the Holy Spirit of God. 2. That it is very likely our blessed Lord would consecrate the waters of baptism to those mysterious ends whither he designed them, as well as the bread and chalice of the holy supper. 3. That it is most likely the Easterlings did preserve a record of many words and actions of the holy Jesus, which are not transmitted to us. 4. It is certain that our blessed Lord did do and say many more things than are in the holy Scriptures; and that this was one of them, we have the credit of this ancient author, and the authority of St. Philoxenus. However, it is much better to make such good use of it as the matter and piety of the prayer will minister, than to quarrel at it by the imperfection of uncertain conjectures.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LADY,

THE

LADY MARY,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF NORTHAMPTON.

I AM now to present to your Honour part of that production, of which your great love to sanctity was parent; and which was partly designed to satisfy those great appetites to virtue, which have made you hugely apprehensive and forward to entertain any instrument, whereby you may grow and increase in the service of God, and the communion and charities of holy people. Your Honour best knows, in what soil the first design of these papers grew; and, but that the excellent personage who was their first root, is transplanted for a time, that he might not have his righteous soul vexed with the impurer conversation of ill-minded men, I am confident you would have received the fruits of his abode to more excellent purposes. But because he was pleased to leave the managing of this to me, I hope your Honour will, for his sake, entertain what that rare person "conceived," though I was left to the pains and danger of "bringing forth;" and that it may dwell with you for its first relation, rather than be rejected for its appendant imperfections, which it contracted not in the fountain, but in the channels of its progress and emanation. Madam, I shall beg of God that your Honour may receive as great increment of piety and ghostly strength in the reading this book, as I receive honour if you shall be pleased to accept and own this as a confession of your great worthiness, and a testimony of the service, which ought to be paid to your Honour, by,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most humble

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

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PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

SECTION X.

Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony of John, and a Miracle.

1. AFTER that the Baptist, by a sign from heaven, was confirmed in spirit and understanding that Jesus was the Messias, he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifested to him; and first to the priests and Levites, sent in legation from the sanhedrim, he professed indefinitely, in answer to their question, that himself was "not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet," whom they, by a special tradition, did expect to be revealed, they knew not when. And concerning himself definitely he said nothing, but that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." He it was who was then "amongst them," but "not known," a person of great dignity, to whom the Baptist was "not worthy" to do the office of the lowest ministry, "who, coming after John, was preferred far before him,"[a] who was to increase,[b] and the Baptist was to decrease, who did "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire."[c]

2. This was the character of his personal prerogatives; but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus, and then whenever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world; this is he."[d] Then he shows him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, with the same designation, and to another disciple with him, "who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night:"[e] Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and then Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which signifies a stone. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathanael, and calls him to see. Thus persons bred in a dark cell, upon their first ascent to the chambers of light, all run staring upon the beauties of the sun, and call the partners of their darkness to communicate in their new and stranger revelation.

3. When Nathanael was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony to be truly honest, and full of holy simplicity, "a true Israelite, without guile." And Nathanael, being overjoyed that he had found the Messias, believing out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, and no suspicion, took that for a proof and verification of his person, which was very insufficient to confirm a doubt, or ratify a probability: but so we believe a story which we love, taking probabilities for demonstrations, and casual accidents for probabilities, and any thing creates vehement presumptions; in which cases our guides are not our knowing faculties, but our affections; and if they be holy, God guides them into the right persuasions, as he does little birds to make rare nests, though they understand not the mystery of operation, nor the design and purpose of the action.

4. But Jesus took his will and forwardness of affections in so good part, that he promised him greater things; and this gave occasion to the first prophecy which was made by Jesus. For "Jesus said unto him, Because I said I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these:" and then he prophesied, that he should see "heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." But, being a doctor of the law, Christ chose him not at all to the college of apostles.[f]

5. Much about the same time, there happened to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee, in the vicinage of his dwelling, where John the evangelist is, by some, supposed to have been the bridegroom; (but of this there is no certainty;) and thither Jesus being, with his mother, invited, he went to do civility to the persons espoused, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. The persons then married were but of indifferent fortunes, richer in love of neighbours than in the fulness of rich possessions; they had more company than wine. For the master of the feast (whom, according to the order and piety of the nation, they chose from the order of priests, to be the president of the feast,[g] by the reverence of his person to restrain all inordination, by his discretion to govern and order the circumstances, by his religious knowledge to direct the solemnities of marriage, and to retain all the persons and actions in the bounds of prudence and modesty) complained to the bridegroom that the guests wanted wine.

6. As soon as the holy Virgin-mother had notice of the want, out of charity, that uses to be employed in supplying even the minutest and smallest articles of necessity, as well as the clamorous importunity of extremities and great indigences, she complained to her son by an indefinite address; not desiring him

[a] John i. 15, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 30. [b] John iii. 30.
[c] Matt. iii. 11. [d] John i. 29, 36. [e] John i. 37, 39.
[f] S. Aug. tra. xvii. c. 1. in Joan.
[g] Hujusmodi fuerunt modesta illa Sertorii convivia quæ descripsit Plutarchus.—GAUDENT. Brixian.

Δεῖπνα πολλὴν ἔχοντα αἰδῶ καὶ κόσμον· οὐδὲ ὁρᾶν τι τῶν αἰσχρῶν ὄντε ἀκούειν ὑπομένοντος· ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς συνόντας ἐυτάκτοις καὶ ἀνυβρίστοις παιδείαις χρῆσθαι καὶ φιλοφροσύναις ἐθίζοντος.—PLUT. in Sertor.

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to make supply, for she knew not how he should; but either, out of an habitual commiseration, she complained without hoping for remedy, or else she looked on him, who was the fountain of holiness and of plenty, as expecting a derivation from him, either of discourses or miracles. But "Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." By this answer intending no denial to the purpose of his mother's intimation, to whom he always bore a religious and pious reverence; but to signify, that he was not yet entered into his period and years of miracles; and when he did, it must be not for respect of kindred or civil relations, but as it is a derivation of power from above, so it must be in pursuit of that service and design, which he had received in charge together with his power.

7. And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the ministers to do whatsoever he commanded. Jesus, therefore, bade them "fill the water-pots," which stood there for the use of frequent washings, which the Jews did use in all public meetings, for fear of touching pollutions, or contracting legal impurities: which they did with a curiousness next to superstition, washing the very beds and tables used at their feasts. The ministers "filled them to the brim;" and, as they were commanded, "drew out, and bare unto the governor of the feast," who "knew not of it," till the miracle grew public, and like light, showed itself; for while they wondered at the economy of that feast, in "keeping the best wine till the last," it grew apparent, that he who was the Lord of the creatures, who, in their first seeds, have an obediential capacity to receive the impresses of what forms he pleases to imprint, could give new natures and produce new qualities in that subject, in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

8. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee." For all those miracles, which are reported to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, feigned by trifling understandings, (who think to serve God with a well-meant lie,) and promoted by the credulity of such persons, in whose hearts easiness, folly, and credulity are bound up, and tied fast with silken thread, and easy softnesses of religious affections, not made severe by the rigours of wisdom and experience. This first miracle "manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him."

Ad SECTION X.

Considerations touching the Vocation of five Disciples, and of the first miracle of Jesus, done at Cana in Galilee.

1. As soon as ever John the Baptist was taught, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, that this was Jesus, he instantly preaches him to all that came near him. For the Holy Ghost was his commission and instruction; and now he was a minister evangelical, and taught all those that have the honour to be servants in so sacred employment, that they must not go till they be sent, nor speak till they be instructed, nor yet hold their peace when their commission is signed by the consignation of the Spirit in ordinary ministry. For "all power and all wisdom is from above," and in spiritual ministrations is a direct emanation from the Holy Spirit: that as no man is fit to speak the mysteries of godliness, be his person never so holy, unless he derive wisdom in order to such ministries; so, be he never so instructed by the assistance of art or infused knowledge, yet, unless he also have derived power as well as skill, authority as well as knowledge, from the same Spirit, he is not enabled to minister in public in ordinary ministrations. The Baptist was sent by a prime designation, "to prepare the way to Jesus," and was instructed by the same Spirit, which had sanctified or consecrated him in his mother's womb to this holy purpose.

2. When the Baptist had showed Jesus to Andrew and another disciple, they immediately followed him, with the distances and fears of the first approach, and the infirmities of new converts; but Jesus seeing them follow their first light, invited them to see the Sun: for God loves to cherish infants in grace; and having sown the immortal seed in their hearts, if it takes root downwards, and springs out into the verdure of a leaf, he still waters it with the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit, in graces and new assistances, till it brings forth the fruits of a holy conversation. And God, who knows that infants have need of pleasant, and gentle, and frequent nutriment, hath given to them this comfort, that himself will take care of their first beginnings, and improve them to the strength of men, and give them the strengths of nature, and the wisdom of the Spirit, which ennoble men to excellencies and perfections. By the preaching of the Baptist they were brought to seek for Christ: and when they did, Christ found them, and brought them home, and made them "stay all night with him;" which was more favour than they looked for. For so God usually dispenses his mercies, that they may run over our thoughts and expectations, and they are given in no proportion to us, but according to God's measures; he considering not what we are worthy of, but what is fit for him to give; he only requiring of us capacities to receive his favour, and fair reception and entertainment of his graces.

3. When Andrew had found Jesus, he calls his brother Simon to be partaker of his joys, which (as it happens in accidents of greatest pleasure) cannot be contained within the limits of the possessor's thoughts. But this calling of Peter was not to a beholding, but to a participation of his felicities; for he is strangely covetous, who would enjoy the sun, or the air, or the sea, alone: here was treasure for him and all the world; and, by lighting his brother Simon's taper, he made his own light the greater and more glorious. And this is the nature of grace, to be diffusive of its own excellencies; for here no envy can inhabit: the proper and personal ends of holy persons, in the contract and

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transmissions of grace, are increased by the participation and communion of others. For our prayers are more effectual, our aids increased, our encouragement and examples more prevalent, God more honoured, and the rewards of glory have accidental advantages, by the superaddition of every new saint and beatified person: the members of the mystical body, when they have received nutriment from God and his holy Son, supplying to each other the same which themselves received, and live on, in the communion of saints. Every new star gilds the firmament, and increases its first glories: and those who are instruments of the conversion of others, shall not only introduce new beauties, but when themselves "shine like the stars in glory," they shall have some reflections from the light of others, to whose fixing in the orb of heaven themselves have been instrumental. And this consideration is not only of use in the exaltations of the dignity apostolical and clerical, but for the enkindling even of private charities; who may do well to promote others' interests of piety, in which themselves also have some concernment.

4. These disciples asked of Christ where he dwelt: Jesus answered, "Come and see." It was an answer very expressive of our duty in this instance. It is not enough for us to understand where Christ inhabits, or where he is to be found; for our understandings may follow him afar off, and we receive no satisfaction unless it be to curiosity; but we must go where he is, eat of his meat, wash in his lavatory, rest on his beds, and dwell with him: for the holy Jesus hath no kind influence upon those who stand at distance, save only the affections of a loadstone, apt to draw them nigher, that he may transmit his virtues by union and confederations; but if they persist in a sullen distance, they shall learn his glories, as Dives understood the peace of Lazarus, of which he was never to participate. Although "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," yet he hath many houses where to convey his graces; he hath nothing to cover his own, but he hath enough to sanctify ours: and as he dwelt in such houses which the charity of good people then afforded for his entertainment; so now he loves to abide in places, which the religion of his servants hath avowed to his honour, and the advantages of evangelical ministrations. Thither we must come to him, or anywhere else where we may enjoy him: he is to be found in a church, in his ordinances, in the communion of saints, in every religious duty, in the heart of every holy person; and if we go to him by the addresses of religion in holy places, by the ministry of holy rites, by charity, by the adherences of faith, and hope, and other combining graces, the graces of union and society, or prepare a lodging for him within us, that he may come to us, then shall we see such glories and interior beauties, which none know, but they that dwell with him. The secrets of spiritual benediction are understood only by them, to whom they are conveyed, even by the children of his house.[a] "Come and see."

[a] Secreta mea mihi et filiis domûs meæ.—CLEM. ALEX. Str.

5. St. Andrew was first called, and that by Christ immediately; his brother Simon next, and that by Andrew; but yet Jesus changed Simon's name, and not the other's; and by this change designed him to an eminency of office, at least in signification, principally above his brother, or else separately and distinctly from him: to show that these graces and favours, which do not immediately co-operate to eternity, but are gifts and offices, or impresses of authority, are given to men irregularly, and without any order of predisponent causes, or probabilities on our part, but are issues of absolute predestination; and as they have efficacy from those reasons which God conceals, so they have some purposes as concealed as their causes; only if God pleases to make us vessels of fair employment and of great capacity, we shall bear a greater burden, and are bound to glorify God with special offices. But as these exterior and ineffective graces are given upon the same good will of God, which made this matter to be a human body, when, if God had so pleased, it was capable of being made a fungus or a sponge; so they are given to us with the same intentions as are our souls, that we might glorify God in the distinct capacity of grace, as before of a reasonable nature. And, besides that it teaches us to magnify God's free mercy, so it removes every such exalted person from being an object of envy to others, or from pleasing himself in vainer opinions: for God hath made him of such an employment, as freely and voluntarily as he hath made him a man, and he no more co-operated to this grace than to his own creation, and may as well admire himself for being born in Italy, or from rich parents, or for having two hands or two feet, as for having received such a designation extraordinary. But these things are never instruments of reputation among severe understandings, and never but in the sottish and unmanly apprehensions of the vulgar. Only this, when God hath imprinted an authority upon a person, although the man hath nothing to please himself withal but God's grace, yet others are to pay the duty, which that impression demands; which duty, because it rapports to God, and touches not the man, but as it passes through him to the fountain of authority and grace, it extinguishes all pretences of opinion and pride.

6. When Jesus espied Nathanael (who also had been called by the first disciples) coming towards him, he gave him an excellent character, calling him "a true Israelite, in whom was no guile," and admitted him amongst the first disciples of the institution; by this character in one of the first of his scholars hallowing simplicity of spirit, and receiving it into his discipline, that it might now become a virtue and duty evangelical. For although it concerns us, as a christian duty, to be prudent, yet the prudence of christianity is a duty of spiritual effect, and in instances of religion with no other purposes than to avoid giving offence to those, that are without and within; that we cause no disreputation to christianity; that we do nothing that may encourage enemies to the religion; and that those that are within the communion and obedience of the church, may not suffer as great inconveniences by the in-

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discreet conduct of religious actions, as by direct temptations to a sin. These are the purposes of private prudence, to which, in a greater measure, and upon more variety of rules, the governors of churches are obliged. But that which christian simplicity prohibits, is the mixing arts and unhandsome means for the purchase of our ends; witty counsels that are underminings of our neighbour, destroying his just interest to serve our own; stratagems to deceive, indefinite and insignificant answers, with fraudulent design; unjust and unlawful concealment of our purposes; fallacious promises and false pretences; flattery, and unjust, and unreasonable praise; saying one thing and meaning the contrary; pretending religion to secular designs; breaking faith; taking false oaths; and such other instruments of human purposes framed by the devil, and sent into the world to be perfected by man. Christian simplicity speaks nothing but its thoughts; and when it concerns prudence that a thought or purpose should be concealed, it concerns simplicity that silence be its cover, and not a false vizor; it rather suffers inconvenience than a lie; it destroys no man's right, though it be inconsistent with my advantages; it reproves freely, palliates no man's wickedness; it intends what it ought, and does what is bidden; and uses courses regular and just, sneaks not in corners, and walks always in the eye of God and the face of the world.

7. Jesus told Nathanael that he knew him, when he saw him "under the fig-tree;" and Nathanael took that to be probation sufficient that he was the Messias, and believed rightly upon an insufficient motive: which, because Jesus did accept, it gives testimony to us, that however faith be produced, by means regular, or by arguments incompetent, whether it be proved or not proved, whether by chance or deliberation, whether wisely or by occasion, so that faith be produced by the instrument, and love by faith, God's work is done, and so is ours. For if St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by the envy of peevish persons; certainly God will not reject an excellent product, because it came from a weak and sickly parent: and he that brings good out of evil, and rejoices in that good, having first triumphed upon the evil, will certainly take delight in the faith of the most ignorant persons, which his own grace hath produced out of innocent, though insufficient, beginnings. It was folly in Naaman to refuse to be cured, because he was to recover only by washing in Jordan. The more incompetent the means is, the greater is the glory of God, who hath produced waters from a rock, and fire from the collision of a sponge and wool; and it is certain, the end, unless it be in products merely natural, does not take its estimate and degrees from the external means. Grace does miracles, and the productions of the Spirit in respect of its instruments are equivocal, extraordinary, and supernatural; and ignorant persons believe as strongly, though they know not why, and love God as heartily, as greater spirits and more excellent understandings: and when God pleases, or if he sees it expedient, he will do to others as to Nathanael, give them greater arguments and better instruments for the confirmation and heightening of their faith, than they had for the first production.

8. When Jesus had chosen these few disciples to be witnesses of succeeding accidents, every one of which was to be a probation of his mission and divinity, he entered into the theatre of the world at a marriage feast, which he now first hallowed to a sacramental signification, and made to become mysterious: he now began to choose his spouse out from the communities of the world, and did mean to endear her by unions ineffable and glorious, and consign the sacrament by his blood, which he first gave in a secret representment, and afterwards in letter and apparent effusion. And although the holy Jesus did in his own person consecrate celibate, and abstinence, and chastity in his mother's; yet, by his presence, he also hallowed marriage, and made it honourable, not only in civil account and the rites of heraldry, but in a spiritual sense, he having new sublimed it by making it a sacramental representment of the union of Christ and his spouse, the church. And all married persons should do well to remember what the conjugal society does represent, and not break the matrimonial bond, which is a mysterious ligament of Christ and his church; for whoever dissolves the sacredness of the mystery, and unhallows the vow by violence and impurity, he dissolves his relation to Christ. To break faith with a wife or husband is a divorce from Jesus, and that is a separation from all possibilities of felicity. In the time of the Mosaical statutes, to violate marriage was to do injustice and dishonour, and a breach to the sanctions of nature, or the first constitutions: but two bands more are added in the gospel, to make marriage more sacred. For now our bodies are made "temples of the Holy Ghost," and the rite of marriage is made significant and sacramental, and every act of adultery is profanation and irreligion; it desecrates a temple, and deflours a mystery.

9. The married pair were holy but poor, and they wanted wine; and the blessed Virgin-mother, pitying the affront of the young man, complained to Jesus of the want; and Jesus gave her an answer, which promised no satisfaction to her purposes. For now that Jesus had lived thirty years, and done in person nothing answerable to his glorious birth, and the miraculous accidents of his person, she longed till the time came, in which he was to manifest himself by actions as miraculous as the star of his birth: she knew, by the rejecting of his trade, and his going abroad, and probably by his own discourse to her, that the time was near; and the forwardness of her love and holy desires possibly might go some minutes before his own precise limit. However, Jesus answered to this purpose, to show, that the work he was to do, was done not to satisfy her importunity, which is not occasion enough for a miracle, but to prosecute the great work of Divine designation. For, in works spiritual and religious, all exterior relation ceases. The world's order, and the manner of our nature, and the infirmities of our person, have produced societies, and they have been the parents of relation; and God hath tied them

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fast by the knots of duty, and made the duty the occasion and opportunities of reward: but in actions spiritual, in which we relate to God, our relations are founded upon the Spirit, and therefore we must do our duties upon considerations separate and spiritual, but never suffer temporal relations to impede our religious duties. Christian charity is a higher thing than to be confined within the terms of dependence and correlation,[b] and those endearments, which leagues, or nature, or society have made, pass into spiritual, and, like stars in the presence of the sun, appear not, when the heights of the Spirit are in place. Where duty hath prepared special instances, there we must, for religion's sake, promote them; but, even to our parents or our children, the charities of religion ought to be greater than the affections of society: and though we are bound, in all offices exterior, to prefer our relatives before others, because that is made a duty; yet to purposes spiritual, all persons eminently holy put on the efficacy of the same relations, and pass a duty upon us of religious affections.

10. At the command of Jesus the water-pots were filled with water, and the water was, by his Divine power, turned into wine; where the different economy of God and the world is highly observable. "Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse;" but God not only turns the water into wine, but into such wine, that the last draught is most pleasant. The world presents us with fair language, promising hopes, convenient fortunes, pompous honours, and these are the outsides of the bole; but when it is swallowed, these dissolve in the instant, and there remains bitterness, and the malignity of coloquinteda. Every sin smiles in the first address, and carries light in the face, and honey in the lip; but "when we have well drunk, then comes that which is worse," a whip with six strings, fears and terrors of conscience, and shame and displeasure, and a caitive disposition, and diffidence in the day of death. But when, after the manner of the purifying of the christians, we fill our water-pots with water, watering our couch with our tears, and moistening our cheeks with the perpetual distillations of repentance; then Christ turns our water into wine; first penitents, and then communicants; first waters of sorrow, and then the wine of the chalice; first the justifications of correction, and then the sanctifications of the sacrament, and the effects of the Divine power, joy, and peace, and serenity, hopes full of confidence, and confidence without shame, and boldness without presumption: for "Jesus keeps the best wine till the last;" not only because of the direct reservations of the highest joys till the nearer approaches of glory, but also because our relishes are higher after a long fruition than at the first essays; such being the nature of grace, that it increases in relish as it does in fruition, every part of grace being new duty and new reward.

[b] Συγγένεια γὰρ οἰκειοτέρα ἡ πρὸς δίκαιοσύνην καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν ὁμιλία.—PHILO in Exposit. General.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu, who didst choose disciples to be witnesses of thy life and miracles, so adopting man into a participation of thy great employment of bringing us to heaven by the means of a holy doctrine; be pleased to give me thy grace, that I may love and revere their persons, whom thou hast set over me, and follow their faith, and imitate their lives, while they imitate thee; and that I also, in my capacity and proportion, may do some of the meaner offices of spiritual building, by prayers, and by holy discourses, and fraternal correption, and friendly exhortations, doing advantages to such souls with whom I shall converse. And since thou wert pleased to enter upon the stage of the world with the commencement of mercy and a miracle, be pleased to visit my soul with thy miraculous grace, turn my water into wine, my natural desires into supernatural perfections, and let my sorrows be turned into joys, my sins into virtuous habits, the weaknesses of humanity into communications of the Divine nature; that since thou "keepest the best unto the last," I may, by thy assistance, grow from grace to grace, till thy gifts be turned to reward, and thy graces to participation of thy glory, O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of Faith.

1. NATHANAEL'S faith was produced by an argument not demonstrative, not certainly concluding; Christ knew him when he saw him first, and he believed him to be the Messias: his faith was excellent, whatever the argument was. And I believe a God, because the sun is a glorious body; or because of the variety of plants, or the fabric and rare contexture of a man's eye: I may as fully assent to the conclusion, as if my belief dwelt upon the demonstrations made by the prince of philosophers in the eighth of his physics and twelfth of his metaphysics. This I premise as an inlet into the consideration concerning the faith of ignorant persons. For if we consider, upon what easy terms most of us now are christians, we may possibly suspect that either faith hath but little excellence in it, or we but little faith, or that we are mistaken generally in its definition. For we are born of christian parents, made christians at ten days old, interrogated concerning the articles of our faith by way of anticipation, even then when we understand not the difference between the sun and a tallow-candle: from thence we are taught to say our catechism, as we are taught to speak, when we have no reason to judge, no discourse to discern, no arguments to contest against a proposition, in case we be catechized into false doctrine; and all that

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is put to us we believe infinitely, and without choice, as children use not to choose their language. And as our children are made christians, just so are thousand others made Mahometans, with the same necessity, the same facility. So that, thus far, there is little thanks due to us for believing the christian creed; it was indifferent to us at first, and at last our education had so possessed us, and our interest, and our no temptation to the contrary, that as we were disposed into this condition by Providence, so we remain in it without praise or excellence. For as our beginnings are inevitable, so our progress is imperfect and insufficient; and what we begun by education, we retain only by custom: and if we be instructed in some slighter arguments to maintain the sect or faction of our country-religion, as it disturbs the unity of christendom; yet, if we examine and consider the account, upon what slight arguments we have taken up christianity itself, (as that it is the religion of our country, or that our fathers before us were of the same faith, or because the priest bids us, and he is a good man, or for something else, but we know not what,) we must needs conclude it the good providence of God, not our choice, that made us christians.

2. But if the question be, Whether such a faith be in itself good and acceptable, that relies upon insufficient and unconvincing grounds? I suppose this case of Nathanael will determine us: and when we consider that faith is an infused grace, if God pleases to behold his own glory in our weakness of understanding, it is but the same thing he does in the instances of his other graces. For as God enkindles charity upon variety of means and instruments, by a thought, by a chance, by a text of Scripture, by a natural tenderness, by the sight of a dying or a tormented beast; so also he may produce faith by arguments of a different quality, and by issues of his providence he may engage us in such conditions, in which, as our understanding is not great enough to choose the best, so neither is it furnished with powers to reject any proposition; and to believe well is an effect of a singular predestination, and is a gift in order to a grace, as that grace is in order to salvation. But the insufficiency of an argument, or disability to prove our religion, is so far from disabling the goodness of an ignorant man's faith, that as it may be as strong as the faith of the greatest scholar, so it hath full as much excellence, not of nature, but in order to Divine acceptance. For as he who believes upon the only stock of education, made no election of his faith; so he who believes what is demonstrably proved, is forced by the demonstration to his choice. Neither of them did choose, and both of them may equally love the article.

3. So that since a small argument in a weak understanding, does the same work that a strong argument in a more sober and learned, that is, it convinces and makes faith, and yet neither of them is matter of choice; if the thing believed be good, and matter of duty or necessity, the faith is not rejected by God upon the weakness of the first, nor accepted upon the strength of the latter principles; when we are once in, it will not be inquired by what entrance we passed thither; whether God leads us or drives us in, whether we come by discourse or by inspiration, by the guide of an angel or the conduct of Moses, whether we be born or made christians, it is indifferent, so we be there, where we should be; for this is but the gate of duty, and the entrance to felicity. For thus far faith is but an act of the understanding, which is a natural faculty, serving indeed as an instrument to godliness, but of itself no part of it; and it is just like fire producing its act inevitably, and burning as long as it can, without power to interrupt or suspend its action; and therefore we cannot be more pleasing to God for understanding rightly, than the fire is for burning clearly: which puts us evidently upon this consideration, that christian faith, that glorious duty, which gives to christians a great degree of approximation to God by Jesus Christ, must have a great proportion of that ingredient, which makes actions good or bad, that is, of choice and effect.

4. For the faith of a christian hath more in it of the will than of the understanding. Faith is that great mark of distinction, which separates and gives formality to the covenant of the gospel, which is a "law of faith." The faith of a christian is his religion, that is, it is that whole conformity to the institution or discipline of Jesus Christ, which distinguishes him from the believers of false religions. And to be one of the faithful signifies the same with being a disciple; and that contains obedience as well as believing. For to the same sense are all those appellatives in Scripture, "the faithful, brethren, believers, the saints, disciples," all representing the duty of a christian. A believer and a saint, or a holy person, is the same thing; brethren signifies charity, and believers, faith in the intellectual sense: the faithful and disciples signify both; for besides the consent to the proposition, the first of them is also used for perseverance and sanctity, and the greatest of charity mixed with a confident faith up to the height of martyrdom. "Be faithful unto the death, (said the Holy Spirit,) and I will give thee the crown of life."[a] And when the apostles, by way of abbreviation, express all the body of christian religion, they call it "faith working by love;"[b] which also St. Paul, in a parallel place, calls a "new creature;"[c] it is "a keeping of the commandments of God:"[d] that is the faith of a christian, into whose definition charity is ingredient, whose sense is the same with keeping of God's commandments; so that if we define faith, we must first distinguish it. The faith of a natural person, or the faith of devils, is a mere believing a certain number of propositions upon conviction of the understanding; but the faith of a christian, the faith that justifies and saves him, is "faith working by charity," or "faith keeping the commandments of God."[e] They are distinct faiths, in order to different ends, and therefore of different constitution; and the instrument of distinction is charity or obedience.

5. And this great truth is clear in the perpetual testimony of holy Scripture. For Abraham is called

[a] Rev. ii. 10. [b] Gal. v. 6. [c] Gal. vi. 15. [d] 1 Cor. vii. 19. [e] Gal. v. 6.

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the "father of the faithful;" and yet our blessed Saviour told the Jews, that if they had been "the sons of Abraham, they would have done the works of Abraham;"[f] and therefore good works are, by the apostle, called the "footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham."[g] For faith, in every of its stages, at its first beginning, at its increment, at its greatest perfection, is a duty made up of the concurrence of the will and the understanding, when it pretends to the Divine acceptance; faith and repentance begin the christian course. "Repent and believe the gospel," was the sum of the apostle's sermons; and all the way after it is, "faith working by love." Repentance puts the first spirit and life into faith, and charity preserves it, and gives it nourishment and increase; itself also growing by a mutual supply of spirits and nutriment from faith. Whoever does heartily believe a resurrection and life eternal, upon certain conditions, will certainly endeavour to acquire the promises, by the purchase of obedience and observation of the conditions. For it is not in the nature or power of man directly to despise and reject so infinite a good: so that faith supplies charity with argument and maintenance, and charity supplies faith with life and motion; faith makes charity reasonable, and charity makes faith living and effectual. And therefore, the old Greeks called faith and charity a miraculous chariot or yoke,[h] they bear the burden of the Lord with an equal confederation: these are like Hippocrates's twins, they live and die together. Indeed faith is the first born of the twins; but they must come both at a birth, or else they die, being strangled at the gates of the womb. But if charity, like Jacob, lays hold upon his elder brother's heel, it makes a timely and a prosperous birth, and gives certain title to the eternal promises. For let us give the right of primogeniture to faith, yet the blessing, yea, and the inheritance too, will at last fall to charity. Not that faith is disinherited, but that charity only enters into the possession. The nature of faith passes into the excellency of charity before they can be rewarded; and that both may have their estimate, that which justifies and saves us, keeps the name of faith, but doth not do the deed till it hath the nature of charity. For to think well, or to have a good opinion, or an excellent or a fortunate understanding, entitles us not to the love of God, and the consequent inheritance;[i] but to choose the ways of the Spirit, and to relinquish the paths of darkness, this is the way of the kingdom, and the purpose of the gospel, and the proper work of faith.

6. And if we consider upon what stock faith itself is instrumental and operative of salvation, we shall find it is, in itself, acceptable, because it is a duty, and commanded; and therefore it is an act of obedience, a work of the gospel, a submitting the understanding, a denying the affections, a laying aside all interests, and a bringing our thoughts under the obedience of Christ. This the apostle calls "the obedience of faith."[k] And it is of the same condition and constitution with other graces, all which equally relate to Christ, and are as firm instruments of union, and are washed by the blood of Christ, and are sanctified by his death, and apprehend him in their capacity and degrees, some higher, and some not so high; but hope and charity apprehend Christ in a measure and proportion greater than faith, when it distinguishes from them. So that if faith does the work of justification, as it is a mere relation to Christ, then so also does hope and charity; or if these are duties and good works, so also is faith: and they all being alike commanded in order to the same end, and encouraged by the same reward, are also accepted upon the same stock, which is, that they are acts of obedience and relation too; they obey Christ, and lay hold upon Christ's merits, and are but several instances of the great duty of a christian, but the actions of several faculties of the new creature. But because faith is the beginning of grace, and hath influence and causality in the production of the other, therefore all the other, as they are united in duty, are also united in their title and appellative; they are all called by the name of faith, because they are parts of faith, as faith is taken in the larger sense; and when it is taken in the strictest and distinguishing sense, they are effects and proper products by way of natural emanation.

7. That a good life is the genuine and true-born issue of faith, no man questions, that knows himself the disciple of the holy Jesus; but that obedience is the same thing with faith,[l] and that all christian graces are parts of its bulk and constitution, is also the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the grammar of Scripture, making faith and obedience to be terms coincident and expressive of each other. For faith is not a single star, but a constellation, a chain of graces, called by St. Paul, "the power of God unto salvation to every believer;"[m] that is, faith is all that great instrument, by which God intends to bring us to heaven: and he gives this reason, "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;" for "it is written, The just shall live by faith." Which discourse makes faith to be a course of sanctity and holy habits, a continuation of a christian's duty, such a duty as not only gives the first breath, but by which a man lives the life of grace. "The just shall live by faith;" that is, such a faith as grows from step to step, till the whole righteousness of God be fulfilled in it. "From faith to faith" (saith the apostle); which St. Austin expounds, from faith believing, to faith obeying;[n] from imperfect faith, to faith made

[f] John viii. 39.
[g] Rom. iv. 12.
[h] *Θαυμαστὴν ξυνωρίδα.*
[i] *Τὸ ἀγαθοὺς μὲν εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἢ κακοὺς, ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἐν τῇ γνώσει ἔσχηκε γινωσκομένων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ αἱρέσει τῶν αἱρουμένων.*—JUST. M. Resp. ad Orthod.
Οὐδὲν κέρδος ὑγιοῦς πίστεως, τῆς πολιτείας διαφθαρμένης.—CHRYS. lib. iv. de Sacerd.
[k] Rom. xvi. 26.
[l] Fides (auctore Cicerone) est firma opinio, et est fida mandatorum executio. Dicta est autem fides (ut ait idem Cicero de Officiis) à *fio*, quòd id *fieri* debeat, quod dictum et promissum est.
[m] Rom. i. 16, 17.
[n] Ex fide annunciantium Evangelium in fidem obedientium Evangelio.—S. AUG.

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perfect by the animation of charity; that "he who is justified, may be justified still." For as there are several degrees and parts of justification, so there are several degrees of faith answerable to it; that in all senses it may be true, that "by faith we are justified, and by faith we live, and by faith we are saved." For if we proceed "from faith to faith," from believing to obeying, from faith in the understanding to faith in the will, from faith barely assenting to the revelations of God to faith obeying the commandments of God, from the body of faith to the soul of faith, that is, to faith formed and made alive to charity; then we shall proceed from justification to justification, that is, from remission of sins to become the sons of God, and at last to an actual possession of those glories, to which we were here consigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

8. And in this sense the holy Jesus is called by the apostle "the author and finisher of our faith:"[o] he is the principle, and he is the promoter; he begins our faith in revelations, and perfects it in commandments; he leads us by the assent of our understanding, and finishes the work of his grace by a holy life: which St. Paul there expresses by its several constituent parts; as "laying aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and running with patience the race that is set before us, resisting unto blood, striving against sin:"[p] for in these things, Jesus is therefore made our example, because he is "the author and finisher of our faith;" without these faith is imperfect. But the thing is something plainer yet, for St. James says, that faith lives not but by charity;[q] and the life or essence of a thing is certainly the better part of its constitution, as the soul is to a man. And if we mark the manner of his probation, it will come home to the main point. For he proves, that "Abraham's faith was therefore imputed to him for righteousness, because he was justified by works: was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up his son? And the scripture was fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. For faith wrought with his works, and made his faith perfect." It was a dead and an imperfect faith, unless obedience gave it being, and all its integral or essential parts. So that faith and charity, in the sense of a christian, are but one duty, as the understanding and the will are but one reasonable soul; only they produce several actions in order to one another, which are but "divers operations, and the same spirit."

9. Thus St. Paul, describing the faith of the Thessalonians, calls it that whereby they "turned from idols," and whereby they "served the living God;"[r] and the faith of the patriarchs "believed the world's creation, received the promises, did miracles, wrought righteousness,"[s] and did and suffered so many things as make up the integrity of a holy life. And therefore, disobedience and unrighteousness is called "want of faith;"[t] and heresy, which is opposed to faith, is "a work of the flesh,"[u] because faith itself is a work of righteousness. And, that I may enumerate no more particulars, the thing is so known, that the word ἀπείθεια,[x] which, in propriety of language, signifies mispersuasion, or infidelity, is rendered disobedience; and the "not providing for our families" is an act of infidelity, by the same reason and analogy that obedience, or charity, and a holy life, are the duties of a christian, of a justifying faith. And although, in the natural or philosophical sense, faith and charity are distinct habits; yet, in the sense of a christian, and the signification of duty, they are the same; for we cannot believe aright, as believing is in the commandment, unless we live aright; for our faith is put upon the account just as it is made precious by charity; according to that rare saying of St. Bartholomew, recorded by the supposed St. Denis, "Charity is the greatest and the least theology:"[y] all our faith, that is, all our religion, is completed in the duties of universal charity; as our charity or our manner of living is, so is our faith. If our life be unholy, it may be the faith of devils, but not the faith of christians. For this is the difference.

10. The faith of the devils hath more of the understanding in it, the faith of christians more of the will: the devils in their faith have better discourse, the christians better affections: they, in their faith, have better arguments, we more charity. So that charity or a good life is so necessary an ingredient into the definition of a christian's faith, that we have nothing else to distinguish it from the faith of devils; and we need no trial of our faith, but the examination of our lives. If you "keep the commandments of God," then have you the faith of Jesus; they are immediate, in St. John's expression:[z] but if you be importune and ungodly, you are in St. Paul's list,[a] amongst them that have no faith. Every vice, that rules amongst us, and sullies the fair beauty of our souls, is a conviction of infidelity.

11. For it was the faith of Moses that made him despise the riches of Egypt; the faith of Joshua, that made him valiant; the faith of Joseph, that made him chaste; Abraham's faith made him obedient; St. Mary Magdalen's faith made her penitent; and the faith of St. Paul made him travel so far, and suffer so much, till he became a prodigy, both of zeal and patience. Faith is a catholicon, and cures all the distemperatures of the soul; it "overcomes the world,"[b] saith St. John; it "works righteousness,"[c] saith St. Paul; it "purifies the heart,"[d] saith St. Peter; "it works miracles," saith our blessed Saviour; miracles in grace always, as it did miracles in nature at its first publication: and whatsoever is good, if it be a grace, it is an act of faith; if it be a reward, it is the fruit of faith. So that as all the actions of man are but the productions of the soul, so are all the actions of the new man

[o] Heb. xii. 2. [p] Heb. xii. 1, 4.
[q] Jam. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23, 26. [r] 1 Thess. i. 8, 9.
[s] Heb. xi. per totum. [t] Col. iii. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 2.
[u] Gal. v. 20. [x] Eph. ii. 2. et v. 6. 1 Tim. v. 8.
[y] ἡ ἀγάπη θεολογία πολλὴ, καὶ ἐλαχίστη. f. 1. de Myst. Theol.
[z] Apoc. xiv. 12. [a] 2 Thess. iii. 2.
[b] 1 John v. 4. [c] Heb. xi. 33. [d] Acts xv. 9.

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the effects of faith. For faith is the life of christianity, and a good life is the life of faith.

12. Upon the grounds of this discourse, we may understand the sense of that question of our blessed Saviour: "When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on earth?"[e] Truly, just so much as he finds charity and holy living, and no more. For then only we can be confident, that faith is not "failed from among the children of men," when we feel the heats of the primitive charity return, and the calentures of the first old devotion are renewed; when it shall be accounted honourable to be a servant of Christ, and a shame to commit a sin. Then, and then only, our churches shall be assemblies of the faithful, and the kingdoms of the world christian countries. But so long as it is notorious, that we have made the christian religion another thing than what the holy Jesus designed it to be; when it does not make us live good lives, but itself is made a pretence to all manner of impiety, a stratagem to serve ends, the ends of covetousness, of ambition, and revenge; when the christian charity ends in killing one another for conscience sake, so that faith is made to cut the throat of charity, and our faith kills more than our charity preserves; when the humility of a christian hath indeed a name amongst us, but it is like a mute person, talked of only; while ambition and rebellion, pride and scorn, self-seeking and proud undertakings, transact most of the great affairs of christendom; when the custody of our senses is to no other purposes, but that no opportunity of pleasing them pass away; when our oaths are like the fringes of our discourses, going round about them, as if they were ornaments and trimmings; when our blasphemies, profanation, sacrilege, and irreligion, are become scandalous to the very Turks and Jews; while our lusts are always habitual, sometimes unnatural; will any wise man think that we believe those doctrines[f] of humility and obedience, of chastity and charity, of temperance and justice, which the Saviour of the world made sacred by his sermon and example; or, indeed, any thing he either said or did, promised or threatened? For is it possible, a man with his wits about him, and believing that he should certainly be damned, (that is, be eternally tormented, in body and soul, with torments greater than can be in this world,) if he be a swearer, or liar, or drunkard, or cheats his neighbour; that this man should dare to do these things, to which the temptations are so small, in which the delight is so inconsiderable, and the satisfaction so none at all?

13. We see, by the experience of the whole world, that the belief of an honest man, in a matter of temporal advantage, makes us do actions of such danger and difficulty, that half so much industry and sufferance would ascertain us into a possession of all the promises evangelical. Now, let any man be asked, whether he had rather be rich or be saved? he will tell you, without all doubt, heaven is the better option by infinite degrees: for it cannot be that riches, or revenge, or lust, should be directly preferred; that is, be thought more eligible than the glories of immortality. That, therefore, men neglect so great salvation, and so greedily run after the satisfaction of their baser appetites, can be attributed to nothing but want of faith; they do not heartily believe that heaven is worth so much; there is upon them a stupidity of spirit, and their faith is dull, and its actions suspended most commonly, and often interrupted, and it never enters into the will: so that the propositions are considered nakedly and precisely in themselves, but not as referring to us or our interests; there is nothing of faith in it, but so much as is the first and direct act of understanding; there is no consideration or reflection upon the act, or upon the person, or upon the subject. So that, even as it is seated in the understanding, our faith is commonly lame, mutilous, and imperfect; and therefore much more is it culpable, because it is destitute of all co-operation of the rational appetite.

14. But let us consider the power and efficacy of worldly belief. If a man believes, that there is gold to be had in Peru for fetching, or pearls and rich jewels in India for the exchange of trifles, he instantly, if he be in capacity, leaves the wife of his bosom, and the pretty delights of children, and his own security, and ventures into the dangers of waters and unknown seas, and freezings and calentures, thirst and hunger, pirates and shipwrecks; and hath within him a principle strong enough to answer all objections, because he believes that riches are desirable, and by such means likely to be had. Our blessed Saviour, comparing the gospel to "a merchantman, that found a pearl of great price," and "sold all to buy it," hath brought this instance home to the present discourse. For if we did as verily believe, that in heaven those great felicities, which transcend all our apprehensions, are certainly to be obtained by leaving our vices and lower desires, what can hinder us but we should at least do as much for obtaining those great felicities as for the lesser, if the belief were equal? For if any man thinks he may have them without holiness, and justice, and charity, then he wants faith; for he believes not the saying of St. Paul: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God."[g] If a man believes learning to be the only or chiefest ornament and beauty of souls, that which will ennoble him to a fair employment in his own time, and an honourable memory to succeeding ages; this if he believes heartily, it hath power to make him endure catarrhs, gouts, hypochondriacal passions, to read till his eyes almost fix in their orbs, to despise the pleasures of idleness, or tedious sports, and to undervalue whatsoever does not co-operate to the end of his faith, the desire of learning. Why is the Italian so abstemious in his drinkings, or the Helvetian so valiant in his fight, or so true to the prince that employs him, but that they believe it

[e] Luke xviii. 8.

[f] Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλελῦσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται.—S. CHRYS. ad Demetr.

[g] Heb. xii. 14.

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to be noble so to be? If they believed the same, and had the same honourable thoughts of other virtues, they also would be as national as these. For faith will do its proper work. And when the understanding is peremptorily and fully determined upon the persuasion of a proposition, if the will should then dissent, and choose the contrary, it were unnatural and monstrous, and possibly no man ever does so: for that men do things without reason, and against their conscience, is, because they have put out their light, and discourse their wills into the election of a sensible good, and want faith to believe truly all circumstances, which are necessary by way of predisposition, for choice of the intellectual.

15. But when men's faith is confident, their resolution and actions are in proportion: for thus the faith of Mahometans makes them to abstain from wine for ever; and therefore, if we had the christian faith, we should much rather abstain from drunkenness for ever; it being an express rule apostolical, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."[h] The faith of the Circumcellians made them to run greedily to violent and horrid deaths, as willingly as to a crown; for they thought it was the king's highway to martyrdom. And there was never any man zealous for his religion, and of an imperious bold faith, but he was also willing to die for it; and therefore, also, by as much reason to live in it, and to be a strict observer of its prescriptions. And the stories of the strict sanctity, and prodigious sufferings, and severe disciplines, and expensive religion, and complaint and laborious charity, of the primitive christians, is abundant argument to convince us, that the faith of christians is infinitely more fruitful and productive of its univocal and proper issues, than the faith of heretics, or the false religions of misbelievers, or the persuasions of secular persons, or the spirit of antichrist. And therefore, when we see men serving their prince with such difficult and ambitious services, because they believe him able to reward them, though of his will they are not so certain, and yet so supinely negligent and incurious of their services to God, of whose power and will to reward us infinitely, there is certainty absolute and irrespective; it is certain probation that we believe it not: for if we believe there is such a thing as heaven, and that every single man's portion of heaven is far better than all the wealth in the world, it is morally impossible we should prefer so little before so great profit.

16. I instance but once more. The faith of Abraham was instanced in the matter of confidence or trust in the Divine promises; and he being "the father of the faithful," we must imitate his faith by a clear dereliction of ourselves and our own interests, and an entire confident relying upon the Divine goodness, in all cases of our needs or danger. Now, this also is a trial of the verity of our faith, the excellency of our condition, and what title we have to the glorious names of christians, and faithful, and believers. If our fathers, when we were in pupilage and minority, or a true and an able friend, when we were in need, had made promises to supply our necessities; our confidence was so great, that our care determined. It were also well that we were as confident of God, and as secure of the event, when we had disposed ourselves to reception of the blessing, as we were of our friend or parents. We all profess that God is almighty, that all his promises are certain, and yet, when it comes to a pinch, we find that man to be more confident, that hath ten thousand pounds in his purse, then he that reads God's promises over ten thousand times.[i] "Men of a common spirit," saith St. Chrysostom, "of an ordinary sanctity, will not steal, or kill, or lie, or commit adultery; but it requires a rare faith, and a sublimity of pious affections, to believe that God will work a deliverance, which to me seems impossible." And indeed St. Chrysostom hit upon the right. He had need be a good man, and love God well, that puts his trust in him. For those we love, we are most apt to trust;[k] and although trust and confidence is sometimes founded upon experience, yet it is also begotten and increased by love, as often as by reason and discourse. And to this purpose it was excellently said by St. Basil, "That the knowledge which one man learneth of another, is made perfect by continual use and exercise; but that which, through the grace of God, is engrafted in the mind of man, is made absolute by justice, gentleness, and charity." So that if you are willing, even in death, not only to confess the articles, but in affliction and death to trust the promises; if, in the lowest nakedness of poverty, you can cherish yourselves with the expectation of God's promises and dispensation, being as confident of food and raiment, and deliverance or support, when all is in God's hand, as you are when it is in your own; if you can be cheerful in a storm, smile when the world frowns, be content in the midst of spiritual desertions and anguish of spirit, expecting all should work together for the best, according to the promise; if you can strengthen yourselves in God when you are weakest, believe when you see no hope, and entertain no jealousies or suspicions of God, though you see nothing to make you confident; then, and then only, you have faith, which, in conjunction with its other parts, is able to save your souls. For in this precise duty of trusting God, there are the rays of hope, and great proportions of charity and resignation.

17. The sum is that pious and most christian sentence of the author of the Ordinary Gloss. "To believe in God through Jesus Christ, is, by believing to love him, to adhere to him, to be united to him by charity and obedience, and to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body, in the communion of

[h] Ephes. v. 18.

[i] Clarè cognosceres non adeò esse facile Deo soli, re aliâ non assumptâ, credere, propter eam, quæ in nobis est, cum mortali compage cognationem. Ab his autem purgari omnibus —— uni autem Deo confidere, magni et cœlestis animi est opus, et ejus qui nullis ampliùs capiatur earum quas videmus rerum illecebris.—PHIL. JUDÆUS, libr. Quis Rerum Div. Hæres.

[k] Ἔνεστι γὰρ πῶς τοῦτο τῇ τυραννίδι Νόσημα, τοῖς φίλοισι μὴ πεποιθέναι.—ÆSCHYL. Prometh.

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saints."[l] I conclude this with a collation of certain excellent words of St. Paul, highly to the present purpose: "Examine yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."[m] Well, but how? "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" There is the touchstone of faith. If Jesus Christ dwells in us, then we are true believers; if he does not, we are reprobates, we have no faith. But how shall we know whether Christ be in us or no? St. Paul tells us that too: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead, by reason of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."[n] That is the christian's mark, and the characteristic of a true believer; a death unto sin, and a living unto righteousness; a mortified body, and a quickened spirit. This is plain enough; and by this we see what we must trust to. A man of a wicked life does in vain hope to be saved by his faith; for indeed his faith is but equivocal and dead, which, as to his purpose, is just none at all; and therefore let him no more deceive himself. For, that I may still use the words of St. Paul, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works."[o] For such, and such only, in the great scrutiny for faith in the day of doom, shall have their portion in the bosom of faithful Abraham.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O eternal God, fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal; let thy grace descend with a mighty power into my soul, beating down every strong hold and vainer imagination, and bringing every proud thought, and my confident and ignorant understanding, into the obedience of Jesus. Take from me all disobedience and refractoriness of spirit, all ambition, and private and baser interests; remove from me all prejudice and weakness of persuasion, that I may wholly resign my understanding to the persuasions of christianity, acknowledging thee to be the principle of truth, and thy word the measure of knowledge, and thy laws the rule of my life, and thy promises the satisfaction of my hopes, and an union with thee to be the consummation of charity, in the fruition of glory. Amen.

II.

Holy Jesus, make me to acknowledge thee to be my Lord and Master, and myself a servant and disciple of thy holy discipline and institution; let me love to sit at thy feet, and suck in with my ears and heart the sweetness of thy holy sermons. Let my soul be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, with a peaceable and docile disposition. Give me great boldness in the public confession of thy name, and the truth of thy gospel, in despite of all hostilities and temptations. And grant I may always remember, that thy name is called upon me, and I may so behave myself, that I neither give scandal to others, nor cause disreputation to the honour of religion; but that thou mayest be glorified in me, and I by thy mercies, after a strict observance of all the holy laws of christianity. Amen.

III.

O holy and ever-blessed Spirit, let thy gracious influences be the perpetual guide of my rational faculties: inspire me with wisdom and knowledge, spiritual understanding, and a holy faith; and sanctify my faith, that it may arise up to the confidence of hope, and the adherences of charity, and be fruitful in a holy conversation. Mortify in me all peevishness and pride of spirit, all heretical dispositions, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine; that when the eternal Son of God, the "author and finisher of our faith," shall come to make scrutiny, and an inquest for faith, I may receive the promises laid up for them that believe in the Lord Jesus, and wait for his coming in holiness and purity: to whom, with the Father, and thee, O blessed Spirit, be all honour and eternal adoration paid, with all sanctity, and joy, and eucharist, now and for ever. Amen.

SECTION XI.

Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover, the first time after his Manifestation, and what followed, till the Expiration of the Office of John the Baptist.

1. IMMEDIATELY after this miracle, Jesus abode a few days in Capernaum, but because of the approach of the great feast of passover, he ascended to Jerusalem; and the first public act of record that he did, was an act of holy zeal and religion in behalf of the honour of the temple. For divers merchants and exchangers of money made the temple to be the market and the bank, and brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice, against the great paschal solemnity. At the sight of which, Jesus, being moved with zeal and indignation, "made a whip of cords, and drave the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accounting tables, and commanded them that sold the doves, to take them from thence." For his anger was holy, and he would mingle no injury with it; and therefore the doves, which, if let loose, would be detrimental to the owners, he caused to be fairly removed; and pub-

[l] Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire, et membris ejus incorporari.—Gloss. Ord. in Rom. 4.

[m] 2 Cor. xiii. 5.
[n] Rom. viii. 10.
[o] Titus iii. 8.

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lished the religion of holy places, establishing their sacredness for ever, by his first gospel sermon that he made at Jerusalem. "Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of merchandise; for it shall be called a house of prayer to all nations." And being required to give a sign of his vocation, (for this, being an action like the religion of the zealots among the Jews, if it was not attested by something extraordinary, might be abused into an excess of liberty,) he only foretold the resurrection of his body after three days' death, but he expressed it in the metaphor of the temple: "Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days. He spake of the temple of his body;" and they understood him of the temple at Jerusalem; and it was never rightly construed till it was accomplished.

2. At this public convention of the Jewish nation, Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messias, and persuaded many disciples, amongst whom was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation: "he came by night to Jesus," and affirmed himself to be convinced by the miracles which he had seen; for "no man could do those miracles, except God be with him." When Jesus perceived his understanding to be so far disposed, he began to instruct him in the great secret and mysteriousness of regeneration, telling him, "that every production is of the same nature and condition with its parent; from flesh comes flesh and corruption, from the Spirit comes spirit, and life, and immortality; and nothing from a principle of nature could arrive to a supernatural end; and therefore the only door to enter into the kingdom of God, was water, by the manuduction of the Spirit; and by this regeneration we are put into a new capacity, of living a spiritual life, in order to a spiritual and supernatural end."

3. This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus; but Jesus bade him not to wonder: for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's Spirit, and an issue of predestination. For "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth," and is, as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and in the manner of production. And, therefore, this doctrine was not to be estimated by any proportions to natural principles, or experiments of sense, but to the secrets of a new metaphysic, and abstracted, separate speculations. Then Christ proceeds in his sermon, telling him there are yet higher things for him to apprehend and believe; for this, in respect of some other mysteriousness of his gospel, was but as earth in comparison of heaven. Then he tells of his own descent from heaven, foretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption, which he came to work for mankind; he preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity; he upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of a holy and a corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, the confidence and serenity of the other. And this is the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest of mystery and speculation, and abstracted senses, of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his passion; all his other sermons being more practical.

4. From Jerusalem, Jesus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to Christ, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There his disciples did receive all comers, and baptized them, as John at the same time did; and by that ceremony admitted them to the discipline and institution, according to the custom of the doctors and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars was the ceremony of their admission. As soon as John heard it, he acquitted himself in public, by renewing his former testimony concerning Jesus; affirming him "to be the Messias, and now the time was come that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution; for Christ came from above, was above all, and the sum of his doctrine was, that which he had heard and seen from the Father, whom God sent to that purpose, to whom God had set his seal that he was true, who spake the words of God, whom the Father loved, to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all things; this was he, whose testimony the world received not." And that they might know, not only what person they slighted, but how great salvation also they neglected, he sums up all his sermons and finishes his mission with this saying: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."[a]

5. For now that the Baptist had fulfilled his office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and bring him to his reward upon this occasion. John, who had so learned to despise the world, and all its exterior vanities and impertinent relations, did his duty justly, and so without respect of persons, that as he reproved the people for their prevarications, so he spared not Herod for his; but abstaining from all expresses of the spirit of scorn and asperity, mingling no discontents, interests, nor mutinous intimations with his sermons, he told Herod, "it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife."[b] For which sermon he felt the furies and malice of a woman's spleen, was cast into prison, and about a year after was sacrificed to the scorn and pride of a lustful woman and her immodest daughter; being, at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching, beheaded by Herod's command, who would not retract his promise, because of his honour, and a rash vow he made in the gaiety of his lust, and complacencies of his riotous dancings. His head was brought up in

[a] John iii. 36.

[b] Montanistæ, et cum his Tertul. adv. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 34, aiunt Philippum defunctum fuisse, et indè probare satagunt secundas nuptias illicitas esse. Sed hoc tam apertâ fraude, ut agens adv. Catholicos Tertullianus abstineat abs tam iniquâ recitatione. Marcioni autem Evangelium neganti hoc obtrudere in facili erat.

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a dish, and made a festival-present to the young girl, who gave it to her mother: a cruelty that was not known among the barbarisms of the worst of people, to mingle banquetings with blood and sights of death; an insolence and inhumanity, for which the Roman orators accused Q. Flaminius of treason, because, to satisfy the wanton cruelty of Placentia, he caused a condemned slave to be killed at supper; and which had no precedent but in the furies of Marius, who caused the head of the consul Antonius to be brought up to him in his feasts, which he handled with much pleasure and insolence.[c]

6. But God's judgments, which sleep not long,[d] found out Herod, and marked him for a curse. For the wife of Herod, who was the daughter of Aretas, a king of Arabia Petræa, being repudiated by paction with Herodias, provoked her father to commence a war with Herod; who prevailed against Herod in a great battle, defeating his whole army, and forcing him to an inglorious flight: which the Jews generally expounded to be a judgment on him, for the unworthy and barbarous execution and murder of John the Baptist; God, in his wisdom and severity, making one sin to be the punishment of another, and neither of them both to pass without the signature of a curse. And Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodias, passing over a frozen lake, the ice brake, and she fell up to the neck in water, and her head was parted from her body, by the violence of the fragments, shaken by the water and its own fall, and so perished; God having fitted a judgment to the analogy and representment of her sin. Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramour, Herod, were banished to Lyons, in France, by decree of the Roman senate,[e] where they lived ingloriously and died miserably; so paying dearly for her triumphal scorn, superadded to her crime of murder: for when she saw the head of the Baptist, which her daughter, Salome, had presented to her in a charger, she thrust the tongue through with a needle, as Fulvia had formerly done to Cicero. But herself paid the charges of her triumph.

Ad SECTION XI.

Considerations upon the first Journey of the Holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the Merchants out of the Temple.

1. WHEN the feast came, and Jesus was ascended up to Jerusalem, the first place we find him in is the temple; where not only was the area and court of religion, but, by occasion of public conventions, the most opportune scene for transaction of his commission and his Father's business. And those christians who have been religious and affectionate, even in the circumstances of piety, have taken this for precedent, and accounted it a good express of the regularity of their devotion, and order of piety, at their first arrival to a city, to pay their first visits to God, the next to his servant, the president of religious rites. First, they went into the church, and worshipped; then to the angel of the church, to the bishop, and begged his blessing; and having thus commenced with the auspiciousness of religion they had better hopes their just affairs would succeed prosperously, which, after the rites of christian countries, had thus been begun with devotion and religious order.

2. When the holy Jesus entered the temple, and espied a mart kept in the holy sept, a fair upon holy ground, he, who suffered no transportations of anger in matters and accidents temporal, was borne high with an ecstasy of zeal, and, according to the custom of the zealots of the nation, took upon him the office of a private infliction of punishment in the cause of God, which ought to be dearer to every single person than their own interest and reputation. What the exterminating angel did to Heliodorus, who came into the temple upon design of sacrilege, that the meekest Jesus did to them who came with acts of profanation; he whipped them forth. And as usually good laws spring from ill manners, and excellent sermons are occasioned by men's iniquities; now also our great Master, upon this accident, asserted the sacredness of holy places, in the words of a prophet, which now he made a lesson evangelical: "My house shall be called a house of prayer to all nations."

3. The beasts and birds there sold, were brought for sacrifice; and the banks of money were for the advantage of the people that came from far, that their returns might be safe and easy, when they came to Jerusalem upon the employments of religion. But they were not yet fit for the temple; they who brought them thither purposed their own gain, and meant to pass them through an unholy usage, before they could be made "anathemata," vows to God: and when religion is but the purpose at the second hand, it cannot hallow a lay design, and make it fit to become a religious ministry, much less sanctify an unlawful action. When Rachel stole her father's gods, though possibly she might do it in zeal against her father's superstition, yet it was occasion of a sad accident to herself. For the Jews say, that Rachel died in child-birth of her second son, because of that imprecation of Jacob, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live."[a] Saul pretended sacrifice, when he spared the fat cattle of Amalek; and Micah was zealous when he made him an ephod and a teraphim, and meant to make himself an image for religion when he stole his mother's money: but these are colours of religion, in which not only the world, but ourselves also, are deceived by a latent purpose, which we are willing to cover with a re-

[c] Senec. cont. lib. v. Livius lib. xxxix. Plut. in Mario.

[d] "Οστις δὲ θνητῶν μέμφεται τὰ Θεῖ, ὅτι
Οὐκ ἐυδὺς, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ μετέρχεται
Τοὺς μὴ δικαίους, πρόφασιν ἐξακουσάτω.
Εἰ γὰρ παραυτίκ' ἦσαν αἱ τιμωρίαι,
Πολλοὶ διὰ φόβον, κ'οὐ δι' ἐυσεβὴ τρόπον,
Θεὸν σέβοιντ' ἄν· νῦν δὲ τὴς τιμωρίας
Ἄπωθεν οὔσης, τῇ φύσει χρῶνται βροτοί.
Ὅταν δὲ φωραθῶσιν, ὀφθέντες κακοί
Τίνουσι ποιναὶς ὑστέροισιν ἐν χρόνοις.
THEODECT.

[e] Jos. Ant. lib. xviii. c. 7. lib. i. Hist. c. 20.

[a] Gen. xxxi. 32.

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mote design of religion, lest it should appear unhandsome in its own dressing. Thus some believe a covetousness allowable, if they greedily heap treasure with a purpose to build hospitals or colleges; and sinister acts of acquiring church-livings are not so soon condemned, if the design be to prefer an able person; and actions of revenge come near to piety, if it be to the ruin of an ungodly man; and indirect proceedings are made sacred, if they be for the good of the holy cause. This is profaning the temple with beasts brought for sacrifices, and dishonours God by making himself accessary to his own dishonour, as far as lies in them; for it disserves him with a pretence of religion: and, but that our hearts are deceitful, we should easily perceive that the greatest business of the letter is written in postscript; the great pretence is the least purpose; and the latent covetousness or revenge, or the secular appendix, is the main engine to which the end of religion is made but instrumental and pretended. But men, when they sell a mule, use to speak of the horse that begat him, not of the ass that bore him.

4. The holy Jesus "made a whip of cords," to represent and to chastise the implications and enfoldings of sin, and the cords of vanity. 1. There are some sins that of themselves are a whip of cords: those are the crying sins, that, by their degree and malignity, speak loud for vengeance; or such as have great disreputation, and are accounted the basest issues of a caitive disposition; or such which are unnatural and unusual; or which, by public observation, are marked with the signature of Divine judgments. Such are murder, oppression of widows and orphans, detaining the labourer's hire, lusts against nature, parricide, treason, betraying a just trust in great instances and base manners, lying to a king, perjury in a priest: these carry Cain's mark upon them, or Judas's sting, or Manasses's sorrow, unless they be made impudent by the spirit of obduration. 2. But there are some sins that bear shame upon them, and are used as correctives of pride and vanity; and if they do their cure, they are converted into instruments of good by the great power of the Divine grace: but if the spirit of the man grows impudent and hardened against the shame, that which commonly follows is the worst string of the whip, a direct consignation to a reprobate spirit. 3. Other sins there are, for the chastising of which Christ takes the whip into his own hand; and there is much need; when sins are the customs of a nation, and marked with no exterior disadvantage, or have such circumstances of encouragement that they are unapt to disquiet a conscience, or make our beds uneasy, till the pillows be softened with penitential showers. In both these cases, the condition of a sinner is sad and miserable. For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" his hand is heavy, and his sword is sharp, and "pierces to the dividing the marrow and the bones;" and he that considers the infinite distance between God and us, must tremble, when he remembers that he is to feel the issues of that anger, which he is not certain whether or no it will destroy him infinitely and eternally. 4. But if the whip be given into our hands, that we become executioners of the Divine wrath, it is sometimes worse; for we seldom strike ourselves for emendation, but add sin to sin, till we perish miserably and inevitably. God scourges us often into repentance; but when a sin is the whip of another sin, the rod is put into our hands, who, like blind men, strike with a rude and undiscerning hand, and, because we love the punishment, do it without intermission or choice, and have no end but ruin.

5. When the holy Jesus had whipped the merchants in the temple, they took away all the instruments of their sin. For a judgment is usually the commencement of repentance: love is the last of graces, and seldom at the beginning of a new life, but is reserved to the perfections and ripeness of a christian. We begin in fear: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: when he smote them, then they turned, and inquired early after God."[b] And afterwards the impresses of fear continue like a hedge of thorns about us, to restrain our dissolutions within the awfulness of the Divine majesty, that it may preserve what was from the same principle begun. This principle of their emendation was from God, and therefore innocent and holy; and the very purpose of Divine threatenings is, that upon them, as upon one of the great hinges, the piety of the greatest part of men should turn: and the effect was answerable; but so are not the actions of all those, who follow this precedent in the tract of the letter. For indeed there have been some reformations, which have been so like this, that the greatest alteration which hath been made, was that they carried all things out of the temple, the money, and the tables, and the sacrifice; and the temple itself went at last. But these men's scourge is to follow after; and Christ, the Prince of the catholic church, will provide one of his own contexture, more severe than the stripes which Heliodorus felt from the infliction of the exterminating angel. But the Holy Spirit of God, by making provision against such a reformation, hath prophetically declared the aptnesses which are in pretences of religious alterations to degenerate into sacrilegious desires: "Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"[c] In this case there is no amendment; only one sin resigns to another, and the person still remains under its power and the same dominion.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, thou bright image of thy Father's glories, whose light did shine to all the world, when thy heart was inflamed with zeal and love of God and of religion, let a coal from thine altar, fanned with the wings of the holy Dove, kindle in my soul such holy flames, that I may be zealous of thy honour and glory, forward in religious duties, earnest in their pursuit, prudent in their managing, ingenuous in my purposes, making my religion to serve no end but of thy glories, and

[b] Psalm lxxviii. 34.

[c] Rom. ii. 22.

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the obtaining of thy promises: and so sanctify my soul and my body, that I may be a holy temple, fit and prepared for the inhabitation of thy ever-blessed Spirit, whom grant that I may never grieve by admitting any impure thing to desecrate the place, and unhallow the courts of his abode; but give me a pure soul in a chaste and healthful body, a spirit full of holy simplicity, and designs of great ingenuity, and perfect religion, that I may intend what thou commandest, and may with proper instruments prosecute what I so intend, and by thy aids may obtain the end of my labours, the rewards of obedience and holy living, even the society and inheritance of Jesus, in the participation of the joys of thy temple, where thou dwellest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, O eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of the Religion of Holy Places.

1. The holy Jesus brought a Divine warrant for his zeal. The selling sacrifices, and the exchange of money, and every lay employment, did violence and dishonour to the temple, which was hallowed to ecclesiastical ministries, and set apart for offices of religion, for the use of holy things; for it was God's house: and so is every house by public designation separate for prayer or other uses of religion; it is God's house. "My house." God had a propriety in it, and had set his mark on it, even his own name. And therefore it was, in the Jews' idiom of speech, called "the mountain of the Lord's house," and "the house of the Lord," by David frequently: God had put his name into all places appointed for solemn worship: "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and bless thee."[a] For God, who was never visible to mortal eye, was pleased to make himself presential by substitution of his name; that is, in certain places he hath appointed that his name shall be called upon, and, by promising and imparting such blessings, which he hath made consequent to the invocation of his name, hath made such places to be a certain determination of some special manner of his presence. For God's name is not a distinct thing from himself, not an idea, and it cannot be put into a place in literal signification; the expression is to be resolved into some other sense: God's name is that whereby he is known, by which he is invocated, that which is the most immediate publication of his essence, nearer than which we cannot go unto him: and because God is essentially present in all places, when he makes himself present in one place more than another, it cannot be understood to any other purpose, but that in such places he gives special blessings and graces, or that in those places he appoints his name, that is, himself, especially to be invocated.

2. So that, when God "puts his name" in any place by a special manner, it signifies that there himself is in that manner: but, in separate and hallowed places, God hath expressed that he puts his name with a purpose it should be called upon; therefore, in plain signification, it is thus: In consecrated places God himself is present to be invoked; that is, there he is most delighted to hear the prayers we make unto him. For all the expressions of Scripture, of "God's house, the tabernacle of God, God's dwelling, putting his name there, his sanctuary," are resolved into that saying of God to Solomon, who prayed that he would hear the prayers of necessitous people in that place: God granting the request, expressed it thus, "I have sanctified the house which thou hast built:"[b] that is, the house which thou hast designed for my worship, I have designed for your blessing; what you have dedicated, I have accepted; what you have consecrated, I have hallowed; I have taken it to the same purpose to which your desires and designation pretended it in your first purposes and expense. So that, since the purpose of man, in separating places of worship, is, that thither, by order and with convenience, and in communities of men, God may be worshipped and prayed unto, God having declared that he accepts of such separate places to the same purposes, says, that there he will be called upon, that such places shall be places of advantage to our devotions in respect of human order, and Divine acceptance and benediction.

3. Now these are therefore God's houses, because they were given by men, and accepted by God, for the service of God and the offices of religion. And this is not the effect or result of any distinct covenant God hath made with man, in any period of the world; but it is merely a favour of God, either hearing the prayer of dedication, or complying with human order or necessities. For there is nothing in the covenant of Moses's law, that, by virtue of special stipulation, makes the assignment of a house for the service of God to be proper to Moses's rite. Not only because God had memorials and determinations of this manner of his presence before Moses's law, as at Bethel, where Jacob laid the first stone of the church, (nothing but a stone[c] was God's memorial,) and the beginning and first rudiments of a temple; but also because after Moses's law was given, as long as the nation was ambulatory, so were their places and instruments of religion: and although the ark was not confined to a place till Solomon's time, yet God was pleased in this manner to confine himself to the ark; and in all places, wherever his name was put, even in synagogues, and oratories, and threshing-floors, when they were hallowed with an altar and religion, thither God came, that is, there he heard them pray, and answered and blessed accordingly, still in proportion to that degree of religion which was put upon them. And those places, when they had once entertained religion, grew separate and sacred for

[a] Exod. xx. 24. [b] 1 Kings ix. 3.

[c] Nec fortuitum spernere cespitem
Leges sinebant, oppida publico
Sumptu jubentes, et deorum
Templa novo decorare saxo.
Hor. lib. ii. od. 15.

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ever. For therefore David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, that it might never return to common use any more: for it had been no trouble or inconvenience to Araunah to have used his floor for one solemnity; but he offered to give it, and David resolved to buy it, because it must, of necessity, be aliened from common uses, to which it could never return any more when once it had been the instrument of a religious solemnity: and yet this was no part of Moses's law, that every place of a temporary sacrifice should be "holy for ever." David had no guide in this but right reason, and the religion of all the world. For such things which were great instruments of public ends, and things of highest use, were also, in all societies of men, of greatest honour, and immured by reverence and the security of laws. For honour and reputation is not a thing inherent in any creature, but depends upon the estimate of God or men, who, either in diffusion or representation, become fountains of a derivative honour. Thus some men are honourable; that is, those who are fountains of honour in civil account have commanded that they should be honoured. And so places and things are made honourable, that as honourable persons are to be distinguished from others by honourable usages and circumstances proper to them, so also should places and things (upon special reason separate) have an usage proper to them, when, by a public instrument or minister, they are so separated. No common usage then; something proper to tell what they are, and to what purposes they are designed, and to signify their separation and extraordinariness. Such are the person of the prince, the archives and records of a kingdom, the walls and great defences of the imperial city, the eagles and ensigns of war amongst the Romans; and, above all things, though not above all persons, the temples and altars, and all the instruments of religion. And there is much reason in it. For thus a servant of a king, though his employment be naturally mean, yet is more honourable, because he relates to the most excellent person: and therefore much more those things which relate to God. And though this be the reason why it should be so; yet, for this and other reasons, they that have power, that is, they who are acknowledged to be the fountains and the channels of honour, I mean the supreme power, and public fame, have made it actually to be so. For whatsoever all wise men, and all good men, and all public societies, and all supreme authority, hath commanded to be honoured or revered, that is honourable and reverend; and this honour and reverence is to be expressed according to the customs of the nation, and instruments of honour proper to the nature of the thing or person respectively. Whatsoever is esteemed so, is so; because honour and noble separations are relative actions and terms, creatures and productions of fame, and the voice of princes, and the sense of people: and they who will not honour those things or those persons, which are thus decreed to be honourable, have no communications with the civilities of humanity, or the guises of wise nations; they do not "give honour to whom honour belongs." Now that which in civil account we call "honourable," the same in religious account we call "sacred:" for by both these words we mean things or persons made separate and retired from common opinion and vulgar usages, by reason of some excellency really inherent in them (such as are excellent men); or for their relation to excellent persons, or great ends, public or religious,[d] (and so servants of princes, and ministers of religion, and its instruments and utensils, are made honourable or sacred): and the expressions of their honour are all those actions and usages which are contrary to despite, and above the usage of vulgar things or places.[e] Whatsoever is sacred, that is honourable for its religious relation; and whatsoever is honourable, that also is sacred (that is, separate from the vulgar usages and account) for its civil excellency or relation. The result is this: that when public authority, or the consent of a nation,[f] hath made any place sacred for the uses of religion, we must esteem it sacred, just as we esteem persons honourable who are so honoured. And thus are judges, and the very places of judicature, the king's presence-chamber, the chair of state, the senate-house, the royal ensigns of a prince, whose gold and purple, in its natural capacity, hath in it no more dignity than the money of the bank, or the cloth of the mart; but it hath much more for its signification and relative use. And it is certain, these things, whose excellency depends upon their relation, must receive the degree of their honour in that proportion they have to their term and foundation: and therefore what belongs to God (as holy places of religion) must rise highest in this account; I mean higher than any other places. And this is besides the honour which God hath put upon them by his presence and his title to them, which, in all religions, he hath signified to us.

4. Indeed, among the Jews, as God had confined his church, and the rites of religion, to be used only in communion and participation with that nation, so also he had limited his presence, and was more sparing of it than in the time of the gospel his Son declared he would be. "It was said of old, that at Jerusalem men ought to worship," that is, by a solemn, public, and great address in the capital expresses of religion, in the distinguishing rites of liturgy; for else it had been no new thing. For, in ordinary prayers, God was then, and long before, pleased to hear Jeremiah in the dungeon, Manasses in prison, Daniel in the lion's den, Jonas in the belly of the deep, others in the offices yet more solemn in the proseuchæ, in the houses of prayer

[d] Religiosum est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum à nobis est; verbum à *relinquendo* dictum, tanquam *cæremonia* à *carendo*.—GEL. lib. iv. c. 9.

[e] Cæremoniæ deorum, sanctitas regum.—JUL. CÆSAR apud Sueton.

[f] Ex lege cujusque civitatis jubentur dii coli. Dictum 5 Sapient. apud Xenophon. Σπένδειν δὲ καὶ θύειν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἑκάστοις προσήκει.—EPICT. c. 38.

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which the Jews had, not only in their dispersion, but even in Palestine, for their diurnal and nocturnal offices. But when the holy Jesus had "broken down the partition-wall," then the most solemn offices of religion were as unlimited as their private devotions were before; for wherever a temple should be built, thither God would come, if he were "worshipped spiritually and in truth;" that is, according to the rites of Christ, (who is "grace and truth,") and the dictate of the Spirit, and analogy of the gospel. All places were now alike to build churches in, or memorials for God, God's houses. And that our blessed Saviour discourses of places of public worship to the woman of Samaria, is notorious, because the whole question was concerning the great addresses of Moses's rites, whether at Jerusalem or mount Gerizim, which were the places of the right and the schismatical temple, the confinements of the whole religion: and in antithesis Jesus said, "Nor here nor there shall be the solemnities of address to God, but in all places you may build a temple, and God will dwell in it."

5. And this hath descended from the first beginnings of religion down to the consummation of it in the perfections of the gospel. For the apostles of our Lord carried the offices of the gospel into the temple of Jerusalem; there they preached, and prayed, and paid vows, but never, that we read of, offered sacrifice: which shows, that the offices purely evangelical were proper to be done in any of God's proper places, and that thither they went not in compliance with Moses's rites, but merely for gospel duties, or for such offices which were common to Moses and Christ, such as were prayers and vows. While the temple was yet standing, they had peculiar places for the assemblies of the faithful, where either by accident, or observation, or religion, or choice, they met regularly. And I instance, in the house of John surnamed Mark, which, as Alexander reports in the life of St. Barnabas, was consecrated by many actions of religion, by our blessed Saviour's eating the passover, his institution of the holy eucharist, his farewell sermon; and the apostles met there in the octaves of Easter, whither Christ came again, and hallowed it with his presence; and there, to make up the relative sanctification complete, the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in "the feast of Pentecost:" and this was erected into a fair fabric, and is mentioned as a famous church by St. Jerome[g] and Ven. Bede; in which, as Adrichomius adds, St. Peter preached that sermon which was miraculously prosperous in the conversion of three thousand; there St. James, brother of our Lord, was consecrated first bishop of Jerusalem; St. Stephen and the other six were there ordained deacons; there the apostles kept their first council, and compiled their creed: by these actions, and their frequent conventions, showing the same reason, order, and prudence of religion, in assignation of special places of divine service, which were ever observed by all the nations, and religions, and wise men of the world. And it were a strange imagination to fancy, that, in christian religion, there is any principle contrary to that wisdom of God and all the world,[h] which, for order, for necessity, for convenience, for the solemnity of worship, hath set apart places for God and for religion. Private prayer had always an unlimited residence and relation, even under Moses's law; but the public solemn prayer of sacrifice in the law of Moses was restrained to one temple: in the law of nature it was not confined to one, but yet determined to public and solemn places; and when the holy Jesus disparked the enclosures of Moses, we all returned to the permissions and liberty of the natural law, in which, although the public and solemn prayers were confined to a temple, yet the temple was not confined to a place; but they might be any where, so they were at all: instruments of order, conveniences of assembling, residences of religion: and God, who always loved order, and was apt to hear all holy and prudent prayers, (and therefore also the prayers of consecration,) hath often declared that he loves such places, that he will dwell in them; not that they are advantages to him, but that he is pleased to make them so to us. And therefore all nations of the world built public houses for religion; and, since all ages of the church did so too,[i] it had need be a strong and a convincing argument that must show they were deceived. And "if any man list to be contentious," he must be answered with St. Paul's reproof, "We have no such custom, nor the churches of God."

6. Thus St. Paul reproved the Corinthians for "despising the church of God"[k] by such uses, which were therefore unfit for God's, because they were proper for their own, that is, for common houses. And although they were at first, and in the descending ages, so afflicted by the tyranny of enemies, that they could not build many churches; yet some they did, and the churches themselves suffered part of the persecution. For so Eusebius reports, that when, under Severus and Gordianus, Philip and Galienus, the christian affairs were in a tolerable condition, they built churches in great number and expense. But when the persecution waxed hot under Diocletian, down went the churches, upon a design to extinguish or disadvantage the religion. Maximinus gave leave to rebuild them. Upon which rescript (saith the story) the christians were overjoyed, and raised them up to an incredible height and incomparable beauty.[l] This was christian religion then, and so it hath continued ever since; and, unless we should have new reason and new revelation, it must continue so till our churches are exchanged for thrones, and our chapels for seats placed before

[g] Epist. 27. De locis Sanct. c. 3. In Descript. Hieros. n. 6.

[h] Φήμη δ' οὔτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται ἥντινα πολλοὶ Λαοὶ Φημίζουσι.—HESIOD.

[i] Omnes ad orandum in idem loci convenite: sit una communis precatio, una mens, una spes in charitate et fide inculpata in Christum Jesum; quo nihil est præstantius. Omnes velut unus quispiam ad templum Dei concurrite, velut ad unum altare, ad unum Jesum Christum, &c.—S. IGNAT. ad Magnes.

[k] 1 Cor. xi. 22.

[l] Καὶ δὴ διήλθομεν σιδηρᾶς τε πύλας καὶ χαλκοῦς δόους· Ἀναβάθρας δὲ πλείστας περικυκλωσάμενοι, ἐς χρυσόροφον οἶκον ἀνήλθόμεν, οἷον Ὅμηρος τὸν Μενελάου φησί.—LUCIAN. Philopat. de Templo Christiano.

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the Lamb in the eternal temple of the celestial Jerusalem.

7. And to this purpose it is observed, that the holy Jesus first ejected the beasts of sacrifice out of the temple, and then proclaimed the place holy, and the scene of representing prayers, which in type intimates the same thing which is involved in the expression of the next words, "My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations;" now and for ever, to the Jews and to the gentiles, in all circumstances and variety of time and nation, God's houses are holy in order to holy uses; the time as unlimited as the nations were indefinite and universal.[m] Which is the more observable, because it was of the outward courts, not whither Moses's rites alone were admitted, but the natural devotion of Jews and gentile proselytes, that Christ affirmed it to be holy, to be the house of God, and the place of prayer. So that the religion of public places of prayer is not a rite of Levi, but a natural and prudent circumstance, and advantage of religion, in which all wise men agree, who therefore must have some common principle, with influence upon all the world, which must be the univocal cause of the consent of all men: which common principle must either be a dictate of natural or prime reason, or else some tradition from the first parents of mankind; which, because it had order in it, beauty, religion, and confirmation from Heaven, and no reason to contest against it, it hath surprised the understanding and practices of all nations. And indeed we find, that even in paradise God had that which is analogical to a church, a distinct place where he manifested himself present in proper manner: for Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord;" and this was the word in all descents of the church, for the being of God in holy places, "the presence of the Lord was there." And probably, when Adam, from this intimation, or a greater direction, had taught Cain and Abel to offer sacrifice to God in a certain place, where they were observed of each in their several offerings, it became one of the rules of religion which was derived to their posterity by tradition, the only way they had to communicate the dictates of Divine commandment.

8. There is no more necessary to be added in behalf of holy places, and to assert them into the family and relatives of religion; our estimate and deportment towards them is matter of practice, and therefore of proper consideration. To which purpose I consider, that holy places being the residence of God's name upon earth, there where he hath put it, that, by fiction of law, it may be the sanctuary[n] and the last resort in all calamities and need, God hath sent his agents to possess them in person for him. Churches and oratories are regions and courts of angels, and they are there, not only to minister to the saints, but also they possess them in the right of God. There they are: so the greatest and Prince of Spirits tells us, the Holy Ghost; "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and his train filled the temple;[o] above it stood the seraphim;" that was God's train, and therefore holy David knew that his addresses to God were in the presence of angels: "I will praise thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I sing praise unto thee:"[p] before the angels,[q] so it is in the Septuagint. And that we might know where or how the kingly worshipper would pay this adoration, he adds, "I will worship towards thy holy temple." And this was so known by him, that it became expressive of God's manner of presence in heaven: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place;"[r] God in the midst of angels, and the angels in the midst of "the holy place;" and God in heaven in the midst of that holy circle, as sure as he is amongst angels in the recesses of his sanctuary. Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels? and are the memorials of the gospel destitute of so brave a retinue? Did the beatified spirits wait upon the types? and do they decline the office at the ministration of the substance? Is the nature of man worse since the incarnation of the Son of God? and have the angels purchased an exemption from their ministry since Christ became our brother? We have little reason to think so; and therefore St. Paul still makes use of the argument to press women to modesty and humility in churches, "because of the angels." And upon the same stock St. Chrysostom[s] chides the people of his diocess for walking, and laughing, and prating in churches: "The church is not a shop of manufactures or merchandise; but the place of angels and of archangels, the court of God, and the image or representment of heaven itself."

9. For if we consider that christianity is something more than ordinary, that there are mysteries in our religion, and in none else, that God's "angels are ministering spirits for our good," and especially about the conveyances of our prayers; either we must think very low of christianity, or that greater things are in it than the presence of angels in our churches: and yet if there were no more, we should do well to behave ourselves there with the thoughts and apprehensions of heaven about us; always remembering, that our business there is an errand of religion, and God is the object of our worshippings; and therefore, although by our weakness we are fixed in the lowness of men, yet because God's infinity is our object, it were very happy if our actions

[m] Quod ab omnibus gentibus observatum est, id non nisi à Deo sanctum est.—SOCRATES.

Χρόνῳ κρατησὰν ἔθος γένους καὶ θρησκείας ἰσχυρότερον.—NICET.

Τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέστατα τούτους οἰκεῖν, οἳ ἂν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἥδεσι καὶ νόμοις, ἐν οἷς καὶ χείρω ἦ, ἥκιστα διαφόρως πολιτένωσι.—ALCIBIAD. apud Thucid. lib. vi.

[n] Psalm xxvii. 4, 5, 6.

[o] Isaiah vi. 1.

[p] Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.

[q] Ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων, LXX. Μαρτύρομαι δὲ ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῶν τὰ ἅγια, καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς ἀγγέλους τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Orat. AGRIP. apud Joseph. lib. ii. c. 16. de bello Judaic.

[r] Psalm lxviii. 17.

[s] Τότε καὶ ἀγγέλοι παριστήκασι τῷ ἱερεῖ, &c.—Homil. 16. in 1 Cor. et de Sacred.

Non dubites assistere angelum quando Christus assistit, Christus immolatur.—S. AMBROS. in cap. i. Lucæ.

Angeli siquidem circumfusi sacra custodiunt, et divinâ freti potentiâ sacerdoti subserviunt.—R. CANUTUS in Leg. Ecc. c. 4.

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did bear some few degrees of a proportionable and commensurate address.

10. Now that the angels are there in the right of God, and are a manner and an exhibition of the Divine presence, is therefore certain, because, whenever it is said in the Old Testament that God appeared, it was by an angel; and the law itself, in the midst of all the glorious terrors of its manifestation, "was ordained by angels," and "a word spoken by angels;" and yet God is said to have descended upon the mount: and in the greatest glory that ever shall be revealed till the consummation of all things, the instrument of the Divine splendour is the apparition of angels; for when the holy Jesus "shall come in the glory of his Father," it is added, by way of explication, that is, "with an host of angels."

11. The result is those words of God to his people, "Reverence my sanctuary."[t] For what God loves in an especial manner, it is most fit we should esteem accordingly. "God loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."[u] The least turf of hallowed glebe is, with God himself, of more value than all the champaign of common possession; it is better in all senses: "The temple is better than gold," said our blessed Saviour;[x] and therefore it were well we should do that which is expressed in the command, of giving reverence to it, for we are too apt to pay undue devotions to gold. Which precept the holiest of that nation expressed by worshipping towards the sanctuary, by pulling off their shoes when they went into it,[y] by making it the determination of their religious addresses, by falling down low upon the earth in their accesses, by opening their windows towards it in their private devotions, by calling it the glory of their nation; as is certain in the instances of David, Daniel, and the wife of Phinehas. I shall not need to say, that the devouter christians, in the first ages, did worship God with solemnities of address whenever they entered into their oratories. It was a civility Jesus commanded his disciples to use to common houses, "When ye enter into a house salute it:" I suppose he means the dwellers in it. And it is certain, whatever those devouter people did in their religious approaches, they designed it to God, who was the major-domo, the master of those assemblies: and thus did the convinced christians in St. Paul's discourse, when he came into the church where they were prophesying in a known language; "The secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God."[z]

12. It was no unhandsome expression of reverencing God's sanctuary, that pious people ever used in bestowing costly and fair ornaments upon it; for so all the christians did: as soon as themselves came from contempt and scorn, they raised christian oratories to an equal portion of their honour; and by this way they thought they did honour to God, who was the Numen of the place. Not that a rich house, or costly offertory, is better in respect of God;[a] for to him all is alike, save that, in equal abilities, our devotion is distinguished by them; and be the offering never so contemptible, it is a rich devotion that gives the best we have: because, although if all the wealth of the Levant were united into a present, it were short of God's infinity; yet such an offertory, or any best we have, makes demonstration, that if we had an offering infinitely better, we should give it, to express our love, and our belief of God's infinite merit and perfection. And, therefore, let not "the widow's two mites" become a precedent to the instance and value of our donation; and because she, who gave no more, was accepted, think that two farthings is as fit to be cast into the corban as two thousand pounds. For the reason why our blessed Saviour commended the widow's oblation was for the greatness of it, not the smallness; "she gave all she had, even all her living;" therefore she was accepted. And indeed, since God gives to us more than enough, beyond our necessities, much for our conveniency, much for ease, much for repute, much for public compliances, for variety, for content, for pleasure, for ornament; we should deal unworthily with God Almighty, if we limit and restrain our returns to him, by confining them within the narrow bounds of mere necessity. Certainly beggarly services and cheapness is not more pleasing to God than a rich and magnificent address.[b] To the best of essences, the best of presents is most proportionable: and although the service of the soul and spirit is most delectable and esteemed by God; yet, because our souls are served by things perishing and material, and we are of that constitution, that by the body we serve the spirit, and by both we serve God, as the spirit is chiefly to be offered to God, because it is better than the body, so the richest oblation is the best in an equal power and the same person, because it is the best of things material: and although it hath not the excellency of the spirit, it hath an excellency that a cheap oblation hath not; and besides the advantage of the natural value, it can no otherwise be spoiled than a

[t] Lev. xix. 30. [u] Psalm lxxxvii. 2. [x] Matt. xxiii. 17.

[y] Ἀνυποδήτους δύειν καὶ προσκυνεῖν, dixit Pythagoras. Maimonides ait nefas fuisse Judæis calceatis ingredi sanctuarium, aut vestitis vestibus opificum. Justin. Martyr. ait gentes in sacris ἀπολούεσθαι.

Intramus templa compositi, ad sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, in omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur.—SEN.

Ex templo illò te ducam ubi non despuas.—NÆVIUS in Triphallo.

Quo ore Thurarias Christianus, si per templa transibit, fumantes aras despuet?—TERT. de Idol. c. 1. CON. GANG. c. 5.

[z] 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

[a] Πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἑκατόμβας δύσαντα μὴ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς γνώμης, καὶ πυνθανόμενον πῶς εἴη προσδεδεγμένος τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ δῶρα, ἀποκρίνεται [Πύθιος,] Ἀλλά μοι ἔναδε χόνδρος ἀγακλυτοῦ Ἑρμιονῆος. Τὸ εὐτελέστατον προκρίνων τῆς τοσαύτης πολυτελείας, ὅτι δὴ θεοσεβείας γνώμῃ κεκόσμητο· μετ' αὐτῆς γὰρ πάντα θεοφιλῆ, καὶ ἄνευ ταύτης οὐδὲν θεῷ φίλον ἂν πότε γένοιτο.—HIEROC. in Pyth.

Plebs devota veni, perque hæc commercia disce
Terreno censu regna superna peti.
SIMPLICIUS P. in Expositione Ecclesiæ S. Andreanæ in Roma.

[b] Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris,
Ædesque labentes deorum, et
Fœda nigro simulachra fumo.—HOR. lib. iii. od. 6.

Impietatis notatur Zeno, quòd dixerit ἱερὰ θεῶν μὴ οἰκοδομεῖν. Et barbarum gentium mos erat aras diis ponere in lucis, nemoribus, et montium jugis, eò quòd deos templis includendos nos esse dixerant.

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meaner offering may; it is always capable of the same commendation from the piety of the presenter's spirit, and may be as much purified and made holy as the cheaper or the more contemptible. God hath nowhere expressed that he accepts of a cheaper offering, but when we are not able to give him better. When the people brought offerings more than enough for the tabernacle, Moses restrained their forwardness, by saying "it was enough," but yet commended the disposition highly, and wished it might be perpetual: but God chid the people when they let his house lie waste, without reparation of its decaying beauty; and therefore sent famines upon the land, and a curse into their estate, because they would not, by giving a portion to religion, sanctify and secure all the rest. For the way for a man to be a saver by his religion, is to deposit one part of his estate in the temple, and one in the hands of the poor; for these are God's treasury and stewards respectively: and this is "laying up treasures in heaven;" and besides that it will procure blessing to other parts, it will help to save our souls; and that is good husbandry, that is worth the saving.

13. For I consider that those riches and beauties, in churches and religious solemnities, which add nothing to God, add much devotion to us, and much honour and efficacy to devotion. For since impression is made upon the soul by the intervening of corporal things, our religion and devotion of the soul receives the addition of many degrees by such instruments.[c] Insomuch that we see persons of the greatest fancy, and such who are most pleased with outward fairnesses, are most religious. Great understandings make religion lasting and reasonable; but great fancies make it more scrupulous, strict, operative, and effectual. And therefore it is strange, that we shall bestow such great expenses, to make our own houses convenient and delectable, that we may entertain ourselves with complacency and appetite; and yet think that religion is not worth the ornament, nor our fancies fit to be carried into the choice and prosecution of religious actions, with sweetness, entertainments, and fair propositions. If we say that God is not the better for a rich house, or a costly service; we may also remember, that neither are we the better for rich clothes; and the sheep will keep us as modest, as warm, and as clean, as the silk-worm; and a gold chain, or a carkenet of pearl, does no more contribute to our happiness, than it does to the service of religion. For if we reply, that they help to the esteem and reputation of our persons, and the distinction of them from the vulgar, from the servants of the lot of Issachar, and add reverence and veneration to us; how great a shame is it, if we study by great expenses to get reputation and accidental advantages to ourselves, and not by the same means to purchase reverence and esteem to religion; since we see that religion, amongst persons of ordinary understandings, receives as much external and accidental advantages, by the accession of exterior ornaments and accommodation, as we ourselves can, by rich clothes and garments of wealth, ceremony, and distinction! And as, in princes' courts, the reverence to princes is quickened and increased by an outward state and glory; so also it is in the service of God. Although the understandings of men are no more satisfied by a pompous magnificence, than by a cheap plainness; yet the eye is, and the fancy, and the affections, and the senses; that is, many of our faculties are more pleased with religion, when religion, by such instruments and conveyances, pleases them. And it was noted by Sozomen, concerning Valens, the Arrian emperor, that when he came to Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, he praised St. Basil, their bishop, and upon more easy terms revoked his banishment,[d] because he was a grave person, and did his holy offices with reverent and decent addresses, and kept his church-assemblies with much ornament and solemnity.

14. But when I consider that saying of St. Gregory, that the church is heaven within the tabernacle, heaven dwelling among the sons of men,[e] and remember, that God hath studded all the firmament, and paved it with stars, because he loves to have his house beauteous, and highly representative of his glory; I see no reason we should not do as Apollinaris says God does: "In earth do the works of heaven." For he is the God of beauties and perfections;[f] and every excellency in the creature is a portion of influence from the Divinity, and therefore is the best instrument of conveying honour to him, who made them for no other end but for his own honour, as the last resort of all other ends for which they were created.

15. But the best manner to reverence the sanctuary, is by the continuation of such actions which gave it the first title of holiness. "Holiness becometh thine house for ever," saith David: "Sancta sanctis," holy persons and holy rites, in holy places;[g] that, as it had the first relation of sanctity by the consecration of a holy and reverend minister and president of religion, so it may be perpetuated in holy offices, and receive the daily consecration, by the assistance of sanctified and religious persons. "Foris canes," dogs and criminal persons are unfit for churches; the best ornament and beauty of a church, is a holy priest and a sanctified people.[h]

[c] Τὰ αἰσθήσει καλὰ, καὶ νοήσει καλῶν εἰκόνες. PHILO.

[d] Quòd cum tanto ornatu tamque decenter sacerdotio fungeretur, conventusque ageret.

[e] Ἐκκλησία ἐστὶν οὐρανὸς ἐπίγειος.

[f] Ἔργον τὸ μέγα, καὶ καλὸν τίμιον· τοῦ γὰρ τοιούτου ἡ θεωρία θαυμαστή.—ARIST.

[g] Gravitas honesta, diligentia attonita, cura solicita, apparitio devota, et processio modesta.—TERT. de Præscript.

Confluunt ad ecclesiam castâ celebritate, honestâ utriusque sexûs discretione.—S. AUG. lib. ii. c. 28. de Civit. Dei.

[h] Τὰ γὰρ κατὰ πόλεις προσευκτήρια τί ἕτερόν ἐστὶν ἢ διδασκαλία φρονήσεως καὶ ἀνδρείας, καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης, εὐσεβείας τε καὶ ὁσιότητος, καὶ συμπάσης ἀρετῆς; —PHILO. Legat. ad Caium.

Μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων, καὶ ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίνων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, καὶ ναὸν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ θείου φωτὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ παρασκευάζων νοῦν.—HIER. in Pyth.

Ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ γῆς θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει· οἷς καὶ ὁ Πύθιος συμφέρεται, λέγων, Εὐσεβίαν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσσον ὀλύμπῳ.—Idem.

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For, since angels dwell in churches, and God hath made his name to dwell there too; if there also be a holy people, that there be saints as well as angels, it is a holy fellowship, and a blessed communion: but to see a devil there, would scare the most confident and bold fancy, and disturb the good meeting; and such is every wicked and graceless person: "Have I not chosen twelve of you, and one of you is a devil?" An evil soul is an evil spirit, and such are no good ornaments for temples: and it is a shame that a goodly christian church should be like an Egyptian temple; without, goodly buildings; within, a dog or a cat, for the deity they adore. It is worse, if in our addresses to holy places and offices, we bear our lusts under our garments. For dogs and cats are of God's making, but our lusts are not, but are God's enemies; and therefore, besides the unholiness, it is an affront to God to bring them along, and it defiles the place in a great degree.

16. For there is a defiling of a temple by insinuation of impurities, and another by direct and positive profanation, and a third by express sacrilege. This "defiles a temple" to the ground. Every small sin is an unwelcome guest, and is a spot in those "feasts of charity," which entertain us often in God's houses: but there are some, (and all great crimes are such,) which desecrate the place, unhallow the ground as to our particulars, stop the ascent of our prayers, obstruct the current of God's blessing, turn religion into bitterness, and devotion into gall; such as are marked in Scripture with a distinguishing character, as enemies to the peculiar dispositions of religion: and such are, unchastity, which defiles the temples of our bodies; covetousness, which sets up an idol instead of God; and unmercifulness, which is a direct enemy to the mercies of God, and the fair return of our prayers. He that shows not the mercies of alms, of forgiveness, and comfort, is forbidden to hope for comfort, relief, or forgiveness, from the hands of God. A pure mind is the best manner of worship,[1] and the impurity of a crime is the greatest contradiction to the honour and religion of holy places. And, therefore, let us imitate the precedent of the most religious of kings; "I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar;"[k] always remembering those decretory and final words of St. Paul, "He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy."[l]

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who "dwellest not in temples made with hands; the heaven of heavens is not able to contain thee," and yet thou art pleased to manifest thy presence amongst the sons of men, by special issues of thy favour and benediction; make my body and soul to be a temple pure and holy, apt for the entertainments of the holy Jesus, and for the habitation of the Holy Spirit. Lord, be pleased, with thy rod of paternal discipline, to cast out all impure lusts, all worldly affections, all covetous desires, from this thy temple; that it may be a place of prayer and meditation, of holy appetites and chaste thoughts, of pure intentions and zealous desires of pleasing thee; that I may become also a sacrifice, as well as a temple; eaten up with the zeal of thy glory, and consumed with the fire of love; that not one thought may be entertained by me, but such as may be like perfume, breathing from the altar of incense; and not a word may pass from me, but may have the accent of heaven upon it, and sound pleasantly in thy ears. O dearest God, fill every faculty of my soul with impresses, dispositions, capacities, and aptnesses of religion; and do thou hallow my soul, that I may be possessed with zeal and religious affections; loving thee above all things in the world, worshipping thee with the humblest adorations and frequent addresses, continually feeding upon the apprehensions of thy divine sweetness, and considerations of thy infinite excellences, and observations of thy righteous commandments, and the feast of a holy conscience, as an antepast of eternity, and consignation to the joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SECTION XII.

Of Jesus's Departure into Galilee; his manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching; his calling of Disciples; and what happened until the Second Passover.

1. "WHEN Jesus understood that John was cast into prison,"[a] and that the Pharisees were envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to his baptism, which he ministered, not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, (who, as Euodius,[b] bishop of Antioch, reports, baptized the blessed Virgin, his mother, and Peter only; and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and they others,) he left Judea, and came into Galilee; and in his passage he must touch Sychar, a city of Samaria, where, in the heat of the day and the weariness of his journey, he sat himself down upon the margin of Jacob's well; whither, when "his disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan

Quin demus id superis———
Compositum jus fasque animis, sanctosque recessus
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto:
Hæc cedò ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.
PERS. Sat. ii.

[1] Animadverto gratiorem existimari qui delubris deorum puram castamque mentem, quàm qui meditatum carmen intulerit.—PLIN. Sec. Pan. Trajan.

Ἁγνὸν δὴ ναοῖο δυώδεος ἔνδον ἰόντα Ἐμφάμεν· ἁγνείη δ' ἐστὶ, φρονεῖν ὅσια.—PORPHYR. de Non Esu Animal. lib. ii.
Optimus animus pulcherrimus cultus. Μὴ καθαρῷ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι οὐ μὴ θεμιτόν.—HIEROCL.

[k] Psalm xxvi. 6.
[l] 1 Cor. iii. 17.
[a] Matt. iv. 12.
[b] Euthym. c. 3, in Joan. Apud Niceph. lib. ii. c. 3. Hist.

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woman cometh to draw water," of whom Jesus asked some, to cool his thirst, and refresh his weariness.

2. Little knew the woman the excellency of the person that asked so small a charity: neither had she been taught, that "a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded," and much rather such a present to the Lord himself. But she prosecuted the spite of her nation,[c] and the interest and quarrel of the schism; and instead of washing Jesus's feet, and giving him drink, demanded, why he, "being a Jew, should ask water of a Samaritan? for the Jews have no intercourse with the Samaritans."

3. The ground of the quarrel was this. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, Salmanasar, king of Assyria, sacked Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Assyrian colony in the town and country; who, by Divine vengeance, were destroyed by lions, which no power of man could restrain or lessen. The king thought the cause was, their not serving the God of Israel according to the rites of Moses; and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest, to instruct the remanent inhabitants in the Jewish religion; who so learned and practised it, that they still retained the superstition of the gentile rites; till Manasses, the brother of Jaddi, the high priest of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governor under king Darius. Manasses being reproved for marrying a stranger, the daughter of an uncircumcised gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to Samaria, persuades his father-in-law to build a temple in mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Aaron, and commences a schism, in the time of Alexander the Great. From whence the question of religion grew so high, that it begat disaffections, anger, animosities, quarrels, bloodshed, and murders; not only in Palestine, but wherever a Jew and Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet. Such being the nature of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world, when other men are not of their minds; and that they please God most, when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed, than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates. This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite that ever any was, because both the people were much given to superstition; and this was helped forward by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals and ceremonials, and which they cared not much to hallow and make moral, by the intertexture of spiritual senses and charity. And, therefore, the Jews called the Samaritans "accursed;" the Samaritans, at the paschal solemnity, would at midnight, when the Jews' temple was open, scatter dead men's bones,[d] to profane and desecrate the place; and both would fight, and eternally dispute the question; sometimes referring it to arbitrators, and then the conquered party would decline the arbitration after sentence; which they did at Alexandria, before Ptolemæus Philometor, when Andronicus had, by a rare and exquisite oration, procured sentence against Theodosius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates: the sentence was given for Jerusalem, and the schism increased, and lasted till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

4. And it was so implanted and woven in with every understanding, that when the woman "perceived Jesus to be a prophet," she undertook this question with him: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the rent wider: and though he gave testimony to the truth, by saying, "Salvation is of the Jews;" and "we know what we worship, ye do not;" yet because the subject of this question was shortly to be taken away, Jesus takes occasion to preach the gospel, to hasten an expedient, and, by way of anticipation, to reconcile the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation, to be verified for ever. Neither here nor there, by way of confinement; not in one country more than another; but wherever any man shall call upon God "in spirit and truth," there he shall be heard.

5. But all this while the holy Jesus was athirst, and therefore hastens at least to discourse of water, though as yet he got none. He tells her of "living water," of eternal satisfactions, of "never thirsting again," of her own personal condition, of matrimonial relation, and professes himself to be the Messias; and then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to see him alone, "talking with a woman," besides his custom and usual reservation. But the woman, full of joy and wonder, left her water-pot, and ran to the city, to publish the Messias: and immediately "all the city came out to see; and many believed on him upon the testimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own discourses." They invited him to the town, and received him with hospitable civilities for two days, after which he departed to his own Galilee.

6. Jesus, therefore, came into the country, where he was received with respect and fair entertainment, because of the miracles which the Galileans saw done by him at the feast: and being at Cana, where he wrought the first miracle, a noble personage; a little king, say some; a palatine, says St. Jerome; a kingly person, certainly, came to Jesus with much reverence, and desired that he would be pleased to come to his house, and cure his son, now ready to die; which he seconds with much importunity, fearing lest his son be dead before he get thither. Jesus, who did not do his miracles by natural operations, cured the child at distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him his son lived; which, by narration of his servants, he found to be true, and that he recovered at the same time when Jesus spake these salutary and healing words. Upon which accident he and all his house became disciples.

7. And now Jesus left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum, a maritime town, and of great resort, choosing that for his scene of preaching, and his

[c] Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.—JUV. Sat. xiv.

[d] Διαῤῥῖψιν ἀνθρωπείων ὀστῶν ἐν ταῖς στοαῖς ποιῆσαι.—JOSEPH. Ant. lib. xviii. c. 3.

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place of dwelling. For now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptist was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand. He, therefore, preached the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." And what that gospel was, the sum and series of all his sermons afterwards did declare.

8. The work was now grown high and pregnant, and Jesus saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service in the work of preaching, and to be "witnesses of all that he should say, do, or teach," for ends which were afterwards made public and excellent. Jesus, therefore, "as he walked by the sea of Galilee," called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before, by the preaching of John; and now "left all," their ship and their net, "and followed him. And when he was gone a little farther, he calls the two sons of Zebedee, James and John; and they went after him." And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacs, cleansing lepers, and giving strength to paralytics and lame people.

9. But when "the people pressed on him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth," and presently "entering into Simon's ship," commanded him "to launch into the deep," and "from thence he taught the people," and there wrought a miracle; for, being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the fishes of the sea, and they obeyed. For when Simon, who had "fished all night in vain, let down his net at the command of Jesus, he enclosed so great a multitude of fishes, that the net brake;" and the fishermen were amazed and fearful at so prodigious a draught. But beyond the miracle, it was intended, that a representation should be made of the plenitude of the catholic church, and multitudes of believers, who should be taken by Simon and the rest of the disciples, whom by that miracle he consigned to become "fishers of men;" who, by their artifices of prudence, and holy doctrine, might gain souls to God; that when the net should be drawn to shore, and separation made by the angels, they and their disciples might be differenced from the reprobate portion.

10. But the light of the sun uses not to be confined to a province or a kingdom. So great a Prophet, and so divine a Physician, and so great miracles, created a fame loud as thunder, but not so full of sadness and presage. Immediately the "fame of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea." And all that had any "sick with divers diseases, brought them to him;" and he laid his hands on every one of them, "and healed them." And when he cured the "lunatics, and persons possessed with evil spirits," the devils cried out, and confessed him to be "Christ, the Son of God;" but he "suffered them not," choosing rather to work faith in the persuasions of his disciples, by moral arguments, and the placid demonstrations of the Spirit; that there might in faith be an excellency in proportion to the choice, and that it might not be made violent by the conviction and forced testimonies of accursed and unwilling spirits.

11. But when Jesus saw his assembly was grown full, and his audience numerous, he "went up into a mountain," and when his disciples came unto him he made that admirable sermon, called "the sermon upon the mount;" which is a Divine repository of most excellent truths and mysterious dictates of secret theology, and contains a breviary of all those precepts which integrate the morality of christian religion; pressing the moral precepts given by Moses, and enlarging their obligation by a stricter sense and more severe exposition, that their righteousness might "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." "He preaches perfection, and the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and toleration of injuries; affixing a special promise of blessing to be the guerdon and inheritance of those graces and spiritual excellencies. He explicates some parts of the decalogue, and adds appendices and precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries, an indifference and incuriousness of temporal provisions, and a seeking of the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness."

12. When Jesus had finished his sermon, and descended from the mountain, a poor leprous person came and worshipped, and begged to be cleansed which Jesus soon granted, engaging him not to publish it where he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest, to offer an oblation, according to the rites of Moses's law; and then came directly to Capernaum, and "taught in their synagogues upon the sabbath-days;" where, in his sermons, he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God; not inviting the people by the soft arguments and insinuations of scribes and Pharisees, but by demonstrations and issues of Divinity. There he cures a demoniac, in one of their synagogues; and by and by, after going abroad, he heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever: insomuch that he grew the talk of all men, and their wonder, till they flocked so to him to see him, to hear him, to satisfy their curiosity and their needs. that after he had healed those multitudes which beset the house of Simon, where he cured his mother of the fever, he retired himself into a desert place very early in the morning, that he might have an opportunity to pray, free from the oppressions and noises of the multitude.

13. But neither so could he be hid, but, like a light shining by the fringes of a curtain, he was soon discovered in his solitude; for the multitude found him out, imprisoning him in their circuits and undeniable attendances. But Jesus told them plainly, he must preach the gospel "to other cities also:" and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Genesareth, so to quit the throng. Whither as he was going, a scribe offered himself a disciple to his institution; till Jesus told him his condition to be worse than foxes and birds, for whom a habitation is provided, but none for him:

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no, "not a place where to bow his head," and find rest. And what became of this forward professor afterwards, we find not. Others that were probationers of this fellowship, Jesus bound to a speedy profession; not suffering one to go home to bid his friends farewell, nor another so much as to "bury his dead."

14. By the time Jesus got to the ship it was late; and he, heavy to sleep, rested on a pillow, and slept soundly, as weariness, meekness, and innocence could make him: insomuch that "a violent storm," the chiding of the winds and waters, which then happened, could not awake him; till the ship, being almost covered with broken billows and the impetuous dashings of the waters, the men already sunk in their spirits, and the ship like enough to sink too, the disciples awaked him, and called for help; "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus arising, reproved their infidelity, commanded the wind to be still and the seas peaceable, and immediately "there was a great calm;" and they presently arrived in the land of the Gergesenes, or Gerasenes.

15. In the land of Gergesites, or Gergesenes, which was the remaining name of an extinct people, being one of the nations whom the sons of Jacob drave from their inheritance, there were two cities; Gadara, from the tribe of Gad, to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land, (which, having been destroyed by the Jews, was rebuilt by Pompey, at the request of Demetrius Gadarensis, Pompey's freedman,) and near to it was Gerasa, as Josephus reports:[e] which diversity of towns and names is the cause of the various recitation of this story by the evangelists. Near the city of Gadara there were many sepulchres in the hollownesses of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invocating evil spirits; insomuch that, at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, "there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce," and so had been long, "insomuch that no man durst pass that way."

16. Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed persons: but there were certain men feeding swine, which, though extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies and quarterings of soldiers, they were permitted, and divers privileges granted to the masters of such herds:[f] and because Gadara was a Greek city, and the company mingled of Greeks, Syrians, and Jews, these last, in all likelihood, not making the greatest number; the devils, therefore, besought Jesus, he would not send them into the abyss, but "permit them to enter into the swine." He gave them leave; "and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the" hot baths, which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built; (which smaller congregation of waters the Jews used to call sea;[g]) or else, as others think, into the lake of Genesareth, "and perished in the waters." But this accident so troubled the inhabitants, that they came and "entreated Jesus to depart out of their coasts." And he did so; leaving "Galilee of the Gentiles," he came to the lesser Galilee, and so again to the city of Capernaum.

17. But when he was come thither, he was met by divers "scribes and Pharisees," who came from Jerusalem, and "doctors of the law from Galilee;" and while they were sitting in a house, which was compassed with multitudes, that no business or necessity could be admitted to the door, a poor paralytic was brought to be cured; and they were fain to "uncover the tiles of the house, and let him down in his bed with cords, in the midst before Jesus," sitting in conference with the doctors. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said, Man, thy sins be forgiven thee." At which saying the Pharisees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy, and that "none but God could forgive sins;" Jesus was put to verify his absolution, which he did in a just satisfaction and proportion to their understandings. For the Jews did believe that all afflictions were punishments for sin; ("Who sinned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?") and that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin. And therefore, Jesus, to prove that his sins were forgiven, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin; and by curing the palsy, prevented their further murmur about the pardon: "That ye might know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arisè, take up thy bed and walk. And the man arose, was healed, and glorified God."

18. Awhile after Jesus went again towards the sea, and on his way, "seeing Matthew," the publican, "sitting at the receipt of custom," he bade him "follow him." Matthew first feasted Jesus, and then became his disciple. But the Pharisees that were with him began to be troubled that he "ate with publicans and sinners." For the office of publican, though amongst the Romans it was honest and of great account, and "the flower of the Roman knights, the ornament of the city, the security of the commonwealth, was accounted to consist in the society of publicans,"[h] yet amongst both the Jews and Greeks the name was odious,[i] and the persons were accursed; not only because they were strangers that were the chief of them, who took in to them some of the nation where they were employed; but because the Jews especially stood upon the charter of their nation and the privilege of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also because they exercised great injustices and oppressions,[k] having a power unlimited, and a covetousness wide as hell, and greedy as the fire or the

[e] Joseph. de Bel. Jud. lib. i. c. 5. et lib. iii. c. 2. et lib. v. c. 3. Epiph. contr. Eb. Hæres. 30.

[f] Cod. Theod. de Sauriis. Joseph. lib. ii. de Bel. Jud. c. 33.

[g] Ut mare Æneum, vas templi ad aquarum receptionem.

[h] Cicero Ep. Famil. lib. xiii. et in Orat. pro Plancio.

[i] Idem ad Quint. Fratrem de Regimine Præfecturæ Asian.

[k] Vita Publicanorum aperta est violentia, impunita rapina, negotiatio nullâ ratione constans, inverecunda mercatura.

Πάντες τελῶναι, πάντες εἰσὶν ἅρπαγες.—SUIDAS, V. Publicanus.

Apud Hebræum textum D. Matthæi publicani dicti *Parisim*, nomine proprio latronibus qui sepes et maceriam dirimunt, licèt propriè dicti *Gabaim*; unde fortasse *Gabella*.

grave. But Jesus gave so fair an account concerning his converse with these persons, that the objection turned to be his apology: for therefore he conversed with them, because they were sinners; and it was as if a physician should be reproved for having so much to do with sick persons; for therefore was he "sent, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of sacrifice.

19. But as the little bubbling and gentle murmurs of the water are presages of a storm, and are more troublesome in their prediction than their violence; so were the arguings of the Pharisees symptoms of a secret displeasure and an ensuing war; though at first represented in the civilities of question and scholastical discourses, yet they did but forerun vigorous objections and bold calumnies, which were the fruits of the next summer. But as yet they discoursed fairly, asking him "why John's disciples fasted often, but the disciples of Jesus did not fast?" Jesus told them, it was because these were the days in which the Bridegroom was come in person to espouse the church unto himself; and, therefore, for "the children of the bride-chamber to fast" then, was like the bringing of a dead corpse to the joys of a bride, or the pomps of coronation; "the days should come, that the bridegroom should retire" into his chamber, and draw the curtains, "and then they should fast in those days."

20. While Jesus was discoursing with the Pharisees, "Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came to him," desiring he would help his daughter, who lay in the confines of death, ready to depart. Whither as he was going, "a woman met him, who had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve years," without hope of remedy from art or nature; and therefore she runs to Jesus, thinking, without precedent, upon the confident persuasions of a holy faith, "that if she did but touch the hem of his garment she should be whole." She came trembling, and full of hope and reverence, and "touched his garment, and immediately the fountain of her unnatural emanation was stopped," and reverted to its natural course and offices. St. Ambrose says, that this woman was Martha. But it is not likely that she was a Jewess, but a gentile; because of that return which she made, in memory of her cure and honour of Jesus, according to the gentile rites. For Eusebius reports,[l] that himself saw, at Cæsarea Philippi, a statue of brass, representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said, it was erected by the care and cost of this woman; adding, (whether out of truth or easiness is not certain,) that at the pedestal of this statue an usual plant did grow, which, when it was come up to that maturity and height as to arrive at the fringes of the brass monument, it was medicinal in many dangerous diseases: so far Eusebius. Concerning which story I shall make no censure but this, that since St. Mark and St. Luke affirm, that this woman, before her cure, "had spent all her substance upon physicians,"[m] it is not easily imaginable how she should become able to dispend so great a sum of money, as would purchase two so great statues of brass: and if she could, yet it is still more unlikely that the gentile princes and proconsuls, who searched all places, public and private, and were curiously diligent to destroy all honorary monuments of christianity, should let this alone; and that this should escape, not only the diligence of the persecutors, but the fury of such wars and changes as happened in Palestine; and that for three hundred years together it should stand up in defiance of all violences and changeable fate of all things. However it be, it is certain that the book against images, published by the command of Charles the Great, eight hundred and fifty years ago, gave no credit to the story; and if it had been true, it is more than probable, that Justin Martyr,[n] who was born and bred in Palestine, and Origen, who lived many years in Tyre, in the neighbourhood of the place where the statue is said to stand, and were highly diligent to heap together all things of advantage and reputation to the christian cause, would not have omitted so notable an instance. It is therefore likely that the statues which Eusebius saw, and concerning which he heard such stories, were first placed there upon the stock of a heathen story or ceremony; and in process of time, for the likeness of the figures, and its capacity to be translated to the christian story, were, by the christians in after-ages, attributed by a fiction of fancy, and afterwards by credulity confidently applied, to the present narrative.

21. "When Jesus was come to the ruler's house," he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jairus's daughter, and his servants had met him, and acquainted him of "the death of the child;" yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, and "entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand, called her," and awakened her from her sleep of death, and "commanded them to give her to eat," and enjoined them not to publish the miracle. But as flames, suppressed by violent detentions, break out and rage with a more impetuous and rapid motion, so it happened to Jesus; who, endeavouring to make the noises and reports of him less popular, made them to be œcumenical; for not only we do that most greedily from which we are most restrained, but a great merit, enamelled with humility, and restrained with modesty, grows more beauteous and florid up to the heights of wonder and glories.

22. As he came from Jairus's house, he cured two blind men, upon their petition, and confession

[l] Lib. vii. Hist. c. 14.
Ἐπίσημον Χριστοῦ ἄγαλμα, et τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀνδριάντα. Apud Sozomen. lib. v. c. 20.
Johan. Damas. de Imagin. Orat. iii. ex Chronico Johan. Melalæ Antioch. Episc. ait, supplicem libellum oblatum Philippo Tetrarchæ Trachonitidis regionis, ut liceret statuas erigere in memoriam accepti beneficii.

[m] Mark v. 26. Luke viii. 43.

[n] Lib. iv. de Imagin. cap. 15.

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that they did believe in him; and cast out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy, but said, "he cast out devils by help of the devils:" their malice being, as usually it is, contradictory to its own design, by its being unreasonable; nothing being more sottish than for the devil to divide his kingdom upon a plot; to ruin his certainties upon hopes future and contingent. But this was but the first eruption of their malice; all the year last past, which was the first year of Jesus's preaching, all was quiet; neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans, did malign his doctrine or person, but he preached with much peace on all hands;[o] for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction "the acceptable year of the Lord."

Ad SECTION XII.

Considerations upon the Intercourse happening between the Holy Jesus and the Woman of Samaria.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus, perceiving it unsafe to be at Jerusalem, returned to Galilee, where the largest scene of his prophetical office was to be represented, he journeyed on foot through Samaria; and being weary and faint, hungry and thirsty, he sat down by a well, and begged water of a Samaritan woman that was a sinner; who at first refused him, with some incivility of language. But he, instead of returning anger and passion to her rudeness, which was commenced upon the interest of a mistaken religion,[a] preached the coming of the Messias to her, unlocked the secrets of her heart, and let in his grace, and made "a fountain of living water to spring up" in her soul, to extinguish the impure flames of lust which had set her on fire, burning like hell ever since the death of her fifth husband,[b] she then becoming a concubine to the sixth. Thus Jesus transplanted nature into grace, his hunger and thirst into religious appetites, the darkness of the Samaritan into a clear revelation, her sin into repentance and charity, and so quenched his own thirst by relieving her needs: and as "it was meat to him to do his Father's will," so it was drink to him to bring us to drink of "the fountain of living water." For thus God declared it to be a delight to him to see us live, as if he were refreshed by those felicities which he gives to us as communications of his grace, and instances of mercy, and consignations to heaven. Upon which we can look with no eye but such as sees and admires the excellency of the Divine charity, which, being an emanation from the mercies and essential compassion of eternity, God cannot choose but rejoice in it, and love the works of his mercy, who was so well pleased in the works of his power. He that was delighted in the creation, was highly pleased in the nearer conveyances of himself, when he sent the holy Jesus to bear his image, and his mercies, and his glories, and offer them to the use and benefit of man. For this was the chief of the works of God, and therefore the blessed Master could not but be highliest pleased with it, in imitation of his heavenly Father.

2. The woman, observing our Saviour to have come with his face from Jerusalem, was angry at him upon the quarrel of the old schism. The Jews and the Samaritans had differing rites, and the zealous persons upon each side did commonly dispute themselves into uncharitableness: and so have christians upon the same confidence, and zeal, and mistake. For although "righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor Christ with Belial;" yet the consideration of the crime of heresy, which is a spiritual wickedness, is to be separate from the person, who is material. That is, no spiritual communion is to be endured with heretical persons, when it is certain they are such, when they are convinced by competent authority and sufficient argument. But the persons of the men are to be pitied, to be reproved, to be redargued and convinced, to be wrought upon by fair compliances and the offices of civility, and invited to the family of faith by the best arguments of charity, and the instances of a holy life; "having your conversation honest among men, that they may, beholding your good works, glorify God in the day when he shall visit them."[c] Indeed, if there be danger, that is, a weak understanding may not safely converse in civil society with a subtle heretic; in such cases they are to be avoided,[d] not saluted: but as this is only when the danger is by reason of the unequal capacities and strengths of the person; so it must be only when the article is certainly heresy, and the person criminal, and interest is the ingredient in the persuasion, and a certain and a necessary truth destroyed by the opinion. We read that St. John, spying Cerinthus in a bath, refused to wash there where the enemy of God and his holy Son had been.[e] This is a good precedent for us when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus; and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal, and the apostle a person assisted up to infallibility. And possibly it was done by the whisper of a prophetic spirit, and upon a miraculous design; for, immediately upon his retreat, the bath fell down, and crushed Cerinthus in the ruins. But such acts of aversation as these are not easily, by us, to be drawn into example, unless in the same or the parallel concourse of equally concluding accidents. We must not quickly, nor upon slight grounds, nor unworthy instances, call heretic; there had need be a long process, and a high conviction, and a competent judge, and a necessary article, that must be ingredients into so sad and decretory definitions, and condemnation of a person

[o] Epiphan. in Panar. lib. ii. tom. 1. hæres. 51.

[a] Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, adversus omnes alios hostile odium.—TACIT.

[b] Quæ nubit toties non nubit, adultera lege est. Offendor mœchâ simpliciore minùs.—MARTIAL. Ep.

[c] 1 Pet. ii. 12.

[d] Tit. iii. 10. 2 Epist. John 10.

[e] Irenæ. lib. iii. cap. 3. Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 13.

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or opinion. But if such instances occur, come not near the danger nor the scandal. And this advice St. Cyprian[f] gave to the lay people of his diocess: "Let them decline their discourses, whose sermons creep and corrode like a cancer; let there be no colloquies, no banquets, no commerce with such who are excommunicate, and justly driven from the communion of the church." "For such persons (as St. Leo[g] descants upon the apostle's expression of heretical discourses) creep in humbly, and with small and modest beginnings; they catch with flattery, they bind gently, and kill privily." Let, therefore, all persons who are in danger, secure their persons and persuasions, by removing far from the infection. And for the scandal, St. Herminigilda gave an heroic example, which, in her persuasion, and the circumstances of the age and action, deserved the highest testimony of zeal, religious passion, and confident persuasion. For she rather chose to die by the mandate of her tyrant father, Leonigildus the Goth, than she would, at the paschal solemnity, receive the blessed sacrament at the hand of an Arian bishop.[h]

3. But excepting these cases, which are not to be judged with forwardness, nor rashly taken measure of, we find that conversing charitably with persons of different persuasions, hath been instrumental to their conversion, and God's glory. "The believing wife" may "sanctify the unbelieving husband;" and we find it verified in church story. St. Cecily converted her husband Valerianus; St. Theodora converted Sisinius; St. Monica converted Patricius, and Theodelinda, Agilulphus; St. Clotilda persuaded king Clodoveus to be a christian; and St. Natolia persuaded Adrianus to be a martyr. For they, having their conversation honest and holy amongst the unbelievers, shined like virgin-tapers in the midst of an impure prison, and amused the eyes of the sons of darkness with the brightness of the flame. For the excellency of a holy life is the best argument of the inhabitation of God within the soul: and who will not offer up his understanding upon that altar, where a Deity is placed as the president and author of religion? And this very intercourse of the holy Jesus with the woman is abundant argument, that it were well we were not so forward to refuse communion with dissenting persons, upon the easy and confident mistakes of a too forward zeal. They that call heretic may themselves be the mistaken persons, and, by refusing to communicate the civilities of hospitable entertainment, may shut their doors upon truth, and their windows against light, and refuse to let salvation in. For sometimes ignorance is the only parent of our persuasions, and many times interest hath made an impure commixture with it, and so produced the issue.

4. The holy Jesus gently insinuates his discourses. "If thou hadst known who it is that asks thee water, thou wouldest have asked water of him." Oftentimes we know not the person that speaks, and we usually choose our doctrine by our affections to the man: but then, if we are uncivil upon the stock of prejudice, we do not know that it is Christ that calls our understandings to obedience, and our affections to duty and compliances. The woman little thought of the glories which stood right against her. He that sat upon the well, had a throne placed above the heads of cherubims. In his arms, who there rested himself, was the sanctuary of rest and peace, where wearied souls were to lay their heads, and dispose their cares, and there to turn them into joys, and to gild their thorns with glory. That holy tongue, which was parched with heat, streamed forth rivulets of holy doctrine, which were to water all the world, to turn our deserts into paradise. And though he begged water at Jacob's well, yet Jacob drank at his: for at his charge all Jacob's flocks and family were sustained, and by him Jacob's posterity were made honourable and redeemed. But because this well was deep, and the woman "had nothing to draw water with," and of herself could not fathom so great a depth, therefore she refused him; just as we do, when we refuse to give drink to a thirsty disciple. Christ comes in that humble manner of address, under the veil of poverty or contempt, and we cannot see Christ from under that robe, and we send him away without an alms; little considering, that when he begs an alms of us in the instance of any of his poor relatives, he asks of us but to give him occasion to give a blessing for an alms. Thus do the ministers of religion ask support; but when the laws are not more just than many of the people are charitable, they shall fare as their Master did; they shall preach, but, unless they can draw water themselves, they shall not drink; but, *si scirent*, if men did but know who it is that asks them, that it is Christ, either in his ministers, or Christ in his poor servants, certainly they could not be so obstructed in the issues of their justice and charity, but would remember that no honour could be greater, no love more fortunate, than to meet with an opportunity to be expressed in so noble a manner, that God himself is pleased to call his own relief.

5. When the disciples had returned from the town, whither they went to buy provision, they "wondered to see" the Master "talking" alone "with a woman." They knew he never did so before; they had observed him to be of a reserved deportment, and not only innocent, but secure from the dangers of malice and suspicion in the matter of incontinence. The Jews were a jealous and froward people: and as nothing will more blast the reputation of a prophet than effeminacy and wanton affections; so he knew no crime was sooner objected, or harder cleared, than that. Of which, because commonly it is acted in privacy, men look for no probation, but pregnant circumstances and arguments of suspect: so nothing can wash it off, until a man can prove a negative; and if he could, yet he is guilty enough in the estimate of the vulgar for having been accused. But then, because nothing is so destructive of the reputation of a governor, so contradictory to the authority and dignity of his person, as the low and baser appetites of uncleanness, and the consequent shame and scorn, (inso-

[f] Lib. i. ep. 3. [g] Serm. 5. de Jejun. Decimi Mensis. [h] Gregor. lib. iii. dial. iii. 13.

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much that David, having fallen into it, prayed God to confirm or establish him *spiritu principali*, with the spirit of a prince, the spirit of lust being uningenuous and slavish,) the holy Jesus, who was to establish a new law in the authority of his person, was highly curious so to demean himself, that he might be a person incapable of any such suspicions, and of a temper apt not only to answer the calumny, but also to prevent the jealousy. But yet, now he had a great design in hand, he meant to reveal to the Samaritans the coming of the Messias; and to this, his discourse with the woman was instrumental. And, in imitation of our great Master, spiritual persons, and the guides of others, have been very prudent and reserved in their societies and intercourse with women. Heretics have served their ends upon the impotency of the sex; and having "led captive silly women," led them about as triumphs of lust, and knew no scandal greater than the scandal of heresy, and therefore sought not to decline any, but were infamous in their unwary and lustful mixtures. Simon Magus had his Helena partner of his lust and heresy; the author of the sect of the Nicolaitans (if St. Jerome was not misinformed) had whole troops of women; Marcion sent a woman as his emissary to Rome; Apelles had his Philomene; Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla; Donatus was served by Lucilla, Helpidius by Agape, Priscillian by Galla, and Arrius spreads his nets, by opportunity of his conversation with the prince's sister, and first he corrupted her, then he seduced the world.

6. But holy persons, preachers of true religion and holy doctrines, although they were careful, by public homilies, to instruct the female disciples, that they who are heirs together with us of the same hope, may be servants in the same discipline and institution; yet they remitted them to "their husbands" and guardians to be "taught at home."[i] And when any personal transactions concerning the needs of their spirit were, of necessity, to intervene between the priest and a woman, the action was done most commonly under public test; or if in private, yet with much caution and observation of circumstance, which might as well prevent suspicion as preserve their innocence. Conversation, and frequent and familiar address, does too much rifle the ligaments and reverence of spiritual authority, and, amongst the best persons, is matter of danger. When the cedars of Libanus have been observed to fall, when David and Solomon have been dishonoured, he is a bold man that will venture farther than he is sent in errand by necessity, or invited by charity, or warranted by prudence. I deny not but some persons have made holy friendships with women; St. Athanasius with a devout and religious virgin, St. Chrysostome with Olympia, St. Jerome with Paula Romana, St. John with the elect Lady, St. Peter and St. Paul with Petronilla[k] and Tecla. And, therefore, it were a jealousy beyond the suspicion of monks and eunuchs, to think it impossible to have a chaste conversation with a distinct sex. 1. A pure and right intention, 2. an intercourse not extended beyond necessity or holy ends, 3. a short stay, 4. great modesty, 5. and the business of religion, will, by God's grace, hallow the visit, and preserve the friendship in its being spiritual, that it may not degenerate into carnal affection. And yet, these are only advices useful when there is danger in either of the persons, or some scandal incident to the profession, that to some persons, and in the conjunction of many circumstances, are oftentimes not considerable.

7. When Jesus had resolved to reveal himself to the woman, he first gives her occasion to reveal herself to him, fairly insinuating an opportunity to confess her sins, that, having purged herself from her impurity, she might be apt to entertain the article of the revelation of the Messias. And indeed a crime in our manners is the greatest indisposition of our understanding to entertain the truth and doctrine of the gospel; especially when the revelation contests against the sin, and professes open hostility to the lust. For faith being the gift of God, and an illumination, the Spirit of God will not give this light to them that prefer their darkness before it; either the will must open the windows, or the light of faith will not shine into the chamber of the soul. "How can ye believe," said our blessed Saviour, "that receive honour one of another?"[l] Ambition and faith, believing God and seeking of ourselves, are incompetent, and totally incompossible. And therefore Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, spake like an angel, (saith Socrates,[m]) saying, "that the mind, which feedeth upon spiritual knowledge, must thoroughly be cleansed. The irascible faculty must first be cured with brotherly love and charity, and the concupiscible must be suppressed with continency and mortification." Then may the understanding apprehend the mysteriousness of christianity. For, since christianity is a holy doctrine, if there be any remanent affections to a sin, there is in the soul a party disaffected to the entertainment of the institution, and we usually believe what we have a mind to: our understandings, if a crime be lodged in the will, being like icterical eyes, transmitting the species to the soul with prejudice, disaffection, and colours of their own framing.[n] If a preacher should discourse, that there ought to be a parity amongst christians, and that their goods ought to be in common, all men will apprehend, that not princes and rich persons, but the poor and the servants, would soonest become disciples, and believe the doctrines, because they are the only persons likely to get by them; and it concerns the other not to believe him, the doctrine being destructive of their interests. Just such a persuasion is every persevering love to a vicious habit; it having possessed the understanding with fair opinions of it, and surprised the will with passion and desires, whatsoever doctrine is its

[i] 1 Cor. xiv. 35.
[k] Quam B. Petri filiam naturalem non fuisse rectè probat Baronius.
[l] John v. 44.
[m] Lib. iv. Hist. cap. 23.
[n] Lurida præterea fiunt quæcunque tuentur
Arquati———
Multaque sunt oculis in eorum denique mista,
Quæ contage suâ palloribus omnia pingunt.—LUCRET. l. iv.

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enemy, will with infinite difficulty be entertained. And we know a great experience of it, in the article of the Messias dying on the cross, which, though infinitely true, yet, because "to the Jews it was a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness," it could not be believed, they remaining in that indisposition; that is, unless the will were first set right, and they willing to believe any truth, though for it they must disclaim their interest: their understanding was blind, because the heart was hardened, and could not receive the impression of the greatest moral demonstration in the world.

8. The holy Jesus asked water of the woman, unsatisfying water; but promised that himself, to them that ask him, would give waters of life, and satisfaction infinite; so distinguishing the pleasures and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual. Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap, and do not gather in; or gather in, and do not possess; or possess, but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy, we are still unsatisfied, it is with anguish of spirit, and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches makes neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our beverage more pleasant; and it feeds the eye, but never fills it, but, like drink to an hydropic person, increases the thirst, and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard seed, fills the furrows of the heart; and as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction, but carries content and fulness all the way; and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity; the soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more, not because it wanted any, but that it can now hold more, is more receptive of felicities: and in every minute of sanctification there is so excellent a condition of joy and high satisfaction, that the very calamities, the afflictions, and persecutions of the world, are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient; like a drop of water falling into a tun of wine, it is ascribed into a new family, losing its own nature by a conversion into the more noble. For now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remanent that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit, and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the throne, whither, when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters which were given to us to drink, when, with the rod of God, the rock Christ Jesus was smitten: the Spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters; and when the angel of the covenant hath stirred the pool, whoever descends hither shall find health and peace, joys spiritual, and the satisfactions of eternity.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, fountain of eternal life, thou spring of joy and spiritual satisfactions, let the holy stream of blood and water issuing from thy sacred side cool the thirst, soften the hardness, and refresh the barrenness of my desert soul; that I, thirsting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool stream, may despise all the vainer complacencies of this world, refuse all societies but such as are safe, pious, and charitable, mortify all sottish appetites, and may desire nothing but thee, seek none but thee, and rest in thee with entire dereliction of my own caitive inclinations; that the desires of nature may pass into desires of grace, and my thirst and my hunger may be spiritual, and my hopes placed in thee, and the expresses of my charity upon thy relatives, and all the parts of my life may speak my love, and obedience to thy commandments: that thou possessing my soul, and all its faculties, during my whole life, I may possess thy glories in the fruition of a blessed eternity; by the light of thy gospel here, and the streams of thy grace, being guided to thee, the fountain of life and glory, there to be inebriated with the waters of paradise, with joy, and love, and contemplation, adoring and admiring the beauties of the Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

Considerations upon Christ's First Preaching, and the Accidents happening about that Time.

1. "WHEN John was cast into prison, then began Jesus to preach;" not only because the ministry of John, by order of Divine designation, was to precede the publication of Jesus, but also upon prudent considerations and designs of Providence, lest two great personages at once upon the theatre of Palestine might have been occasion of divided thoughts, and these have determined upon a schism, some professing themselves to be of Christ, some of John. For once an offer was made of a dividing question by the spite of the Pharisees, "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and thy disciples fast not?" But when John went off from the scene, then Jesus appeared, like the sun in succession to the morning star, and there were no divided interests upon mistake, or the fond adherences of the followers. And although the holy Jesus would certainly have cured all accidental inconveniences which might have happened in such accidents; yet this may become a precedent to all prelates, to be prudent in avoiding all occasions of a schism, and, rather than divide a people, submit and relinquish an opportunity of preaching to their inferiors, as knowing that God is better served by charity than a homily; and if my modesty made me resign to my inferior, the advantages of honour to God by the cessions of humility are of greater consideration than the smaller and accidental advantages of better penned and more accurate discourses. But our blessed Lord, designing to gather disciples, did it in the manner of the more extraordinary persons and doctors of the Jews, and particularly of the Baptist, he initiated them into the institution by the solemnity of a baptism; but yet he was pleased not to minister it in his own

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person. His apostles were baptized in John's baptism, said Tertullian;[a] or else, St. Peter only was baptized by his Lord, and he baptized the rest. However, the Lord was pleased to depute the ministry of his servants, that so he might constitute a ministry; that he might reserve it to himself as a specialty to "baptize with the Spirit," as his servants did "with water;" that he might declare, that the efficacy of the rite did not depend upon the dignity of the minister, but his own institution, and the holy covenant; and lastly, lest they who were baptized by him in person might please themselves above their brethren, whose needs were served by a lower ministry.

2. The holy Jesus, the great Physician of our souls, now entering upon his cure, and the diocess of Palestine, which was afterwards enlarged to the pale of the catholic church, was curious to observe all advantages of prudence for the benefit of souls, by the choice of place, by quitting the place of his education, (which, because it had been poor and humble, was apt to procure contempt to his doctrine, and despite to his person,) by fixing in Capernaum, which had the advantage of popularity, and the opportunity of extending the benefit, yet had not the honour and ambition of Jerusalem; that the ministers of religion might be taught to seek and desire employment in such circumstances which may serve the end of God, but not of ambition; to promote the interest of souls, but not the inordination of lower appetites. Jesus quitted his natural and civil interests, when they were less consistent with the end of God and his prophetical office, and considered not his mother's house and the vicinage, in the accounts of religion, beyond those other places in which he might better do his Father's work: in which a forward piety might behold the insinuation of a duty to such persons, who, by rights of law and custom, were so far instrumental to the cure of souls, as to design the persons; they might do but duty if they first considered the interests of souls before the advantages of their kindred and relatives: and although, if all things else be alike, they may in equal dispositions prefer their own before strangers; yet it were but reason that they should first consider sadly if the men be equal, before they remember that they are of their kindred, and not let this consideration be ingredient into the former judgment. And another degree of liberty yet there is; if our kindred be persons apt and holy, and without exceptions either of law, or prudence, or religion, we may do them advantages before others who have some degrees of learning and improvement beyond the other: or else no man might lawfully prefer his kindred, unless they were absolutely the ablest in a diocess or kingdom; which doctrine were a snare apt to produce scruples to the consciences, rather than advantages to the cure. But then also patrons should be careful, that they do not account their clerks by an estimate taken from comparison with unworthy candidates, set up on purpose, that when we choose our kindred we may abuse our consciences by saying, we have fulfilled our trust, and made election of the more worthy. In these and the like cases, let every man who is concerned deal with justice, nobleness, and sincerity, with the simplicity of a christian and the wisdom of a man, without tricks and stratagems, to disadvantage the church by doing temporal advantages to his friend or family.

3. The blessed Master began his office with a sermon of repentance, as his decessor, John the Baptist, did in his ministration, to tell the world that the new covenant, which was to be established by the mediation and office of the holy Jesus, was a covenant of grace and favour, not established upon works, but upon promises, and remission of right on God's part, and remission of sins on our part. The law was "a covenant of works," and whoever prevaricated any of its sanctions in a considerable degree, he stood sentenced by it without any hopes of restitution supplied by the law. And therefore it was the "covenant of works;" not because good works were then required more than now, or because they had more efficacy than now; but because all our hopes did rely upon the perfection of works and innocence, without the suppletories of grace, pardon, and repentance. But the gospel is therefore "a covenant of grace," not that works are excluded from our duty, or from co-operating to heaven; but that, because there is in it so much mercy, the imperfections of the works are made up by the grace of Jesus, and the defects of innocence are supplied by the substitution of repentance. Abatements are made for the infirmities and miseries of humanity; and if we do our endeavour now, after the manner of men, the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, conformity to his laws, and submission to his doctrine, entitles us to the grace he hath purchased for us, that is, our sins for his sake shall be pardoned. So that the law and the gospel are not opposed barely upon the title of faith and works, but as the "covenant of faith" and the "covenant of works." In the faith of a christian, works are the great ingredient and the chief of the constitution, but the gospel is not "a covenant of works," that is, it is not an agreement upon the stock of innocence without allowances of repentance, requiring obedience in rigour and strictest estimate. But the gospel requires the holiness of a christian, and yet after the manner of a man; for, always provided that we do not allow to ourselves a liberty, but endeavour with all our strength, and love with all our soul, that which, if it were upon our allowance, would be required at our hands, now that it is against our will, and highly contested against, is put upon the stock of Christ, and allowed to us by God in the accounts of pardon by the merits of Jesus, by the covenant of the gospel. And this is the repentance and remission of sins which John first preached upon the approximation of the kingdom, and Christ at the first manifestation of it, and the apostles afterward in the name of Jesus.

4. Jesus now having begun his preaching, began also to gather his family; and first called Simon and Andrew, then James and John, at whose voca-

[a] Lib. de Baptism.

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tion he wrought a miracle, which was a signification of their office, and the success of it; a draught of fishes so great and prodigious, that it convinced them that he was a person very extraordinary, whose voice the fishes heard, and came at his call: and since he designed them to become "fishers of men," although themselves were as unlikely instruments to persuade men, as the voice of the Son of man to command fishes, yet they should prevail in so great numbers, that the whole world should run after them, and, upon their summons, come into the net of the gospel, becoming disciples of the glorious Nazarene. St. Peter, the first time that he threw his net, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecost, caught three thousand men; and at one sermon, sometimes the princes of a nation have been converted, and the whole land presently baptized; and the multitudes so great, that the apostles were forced to design some men to the ministration of baptism by way of peculiar office; and it grew to be work enough, the easiness of the ministry being made busy and full of employment where a whole nation became disciples. And indeed the doctrine is so holy, the principle so Divine, the instruments so supernatural, the promises so glorious, the revelations so admirable, the rites so mysterious, the whole fabric of the discipline so full of wisdom, persuasion, and energy, that the infinite number of the first conversions were not so great a wonder, as that there are so few now; every man calling himself christian, but few having that "power of godliness" which distinguishes christian from a word and an empty name. And the word is now the same, and the arguments greater, (for some have been growing ever since, as the prophecies have been fulfilled,) and the sermons more, and "the Spirit the same;" and yet such "diversity of operations," that we hear and read the sermons and dictates evangelical as we do a romance, but that it is with less passion, but altogether as much unconcerned as with a story of Salmanasar or Ibrahim Bassa: for we do not leave one vice, or reject one lust, or deny one impetuous temptation the more, for the four Gospels' sake, and all St. Paul's epistles mingled in the argument. And yet all think themselves fishes within Christ's net, and the prey of the gospel: and it is true they are so; for "the kingdom is like unto a net, which enclosed fishes good and bad;" but this shall be of small advantage when the net shall be drawn to the shore, and the separation made.

5. When Jesus called those disciples, they had been "fishing all night, and caught nothing;" but when Christ bade them "let down the net," they took multitudes: to show to us, that the success of our endeavours is not in proportion to our labours, but the Divine assistance and benediction. It is not the excellency of the instrument, but the capacity of the subject, nor yet this alone, but the aptness of the application, nor that without an influence from Heaven, can produce the fruits of a holy persuasion and conversion. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God gives the increase." Indeed, when we let down the nets at the Divine appointment, the success is the more probable; and certainly God will bring benefit to the place, or honour to himself, or salvation to them that will obey, or conviction to them that will not: but whatever the fruit be in respect of others, the reward shall be great to themselves. And therefore St. Paul did not say he had profited, but, "he had laboured more than they all," as knowing the Divine acceptance would take its account in proportion to our endeavours and intendments; not by commensuration to the effect, which being without us, depending upon God's blessing, and the co-operation of the recipients, can be no ingredients into our account. But this also may help to support the weariness of our hopes, and the protraction and deferring of our expectation, if a laborious prelate and an assiduous preacher have but few returns to his many cares and greater labours. A whole night a man may labour, (the longest life is no other,) and yet catch nothing, and then the Lord may visit us with his special presence, and more forward assistance, and the harvest may grow up with the swiftness of a gourd, and the fruitfulness of olives, and the plaisance of the vine, and the strength of wheat; and whole troops of penitents may arise from the darkness of their graves at the call of one sermon, even when he pleases: and till then we must be content that we do our duty, and lay the consideration of the effect at the feet of Jesus.

6. In the days of the patriarchs, the governors of the Lord's people were called shepherds: so was Moses, and so was David. In the days of the gospel they are shepherds still, but with the addition of a new appellative, for now they are called fishers. Both the callings were honest, humble, and laborious, watchful and full of trouble; but now that both the titles are conjunct, we may observe the symbol of an implicit and folded duty. There is much simplicity and care in the shepherd's trade; there is much craft and labour in the fisher's: and a prelate is to be both full of piety to his flock, careful of their welfare; and because, in the political and spiritual sense too, feeding and governing are the same duty, it concerns them that have cure of souls to be discreet and wary, observant of advantages, laying such baits for the people as may entice them into the nets of Jesus's discipline. "But being crafty I caught you," saith St. Paul; for he was a fisher too. And so must spiritual persons be fishers to all spiritual senses of watchfulness, and care, and prudence: only they must not fish for preferment and ambitious purposes, but must say with the king of Sodom, "Date nobis animas, cætera vos tollite;" which St. Paul renders, "We seek not yours, but you." And in order to such acquist, the purchase of souls, let them have the diligence and the craft of fishers, the watchfulness and care of shepherds, the prudence of politics, the tenderness of parents, the spirit of government, the wariness of observation, great knowledge of the dispositions of their people, and experience of such advantages by means

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of which they may serve the ends of God, and of salvation upon their souls.

7. When Peter had received the fruits of a rich miracle, in the prodigious and prosperous draught of fishes, he instantly "falls down at the feet of Jesus," and confesses himself "a sinner," and unworthy of the presence of Christ. In which confession I not only consider the conviction of his understanding by the testimony of the miracle, but the modesty of his spirit, who, in his exaltation and the joy of a sudden and happy success, retired into humility and consideration of his own unworthiness, lest, as it happens in sudden joys, the lavishness of his spirit should transport him to intemperance, to looser affections, to vanity, and garishness, less becoming the severity and government of a disciple of so great a Master. For in such great and sudden accidents, men usually are dissolved and melted into joy and inconsideration, and let fly all their severe principles and discipline of manners, till, as Peter here did, though to another purpose, they say to Christ, "Depart from me, O Lord;" as if such excellencies of joys, like the lesser stars, did disappear at the presence of him, who is the fountain of all joys regular and just. When the spirits of the body have been bound up by the cold winter air, the warmth of the spring makes so great an aperture of the passages, and, by consequence, such dissolution of spirits, in the presence of the sun, that it becomes the occasion of fevers and violent diseases. Just such a thing is a sudden joy, in which the spirits leap out from their cells of austerity and sobriety, and are warmed into fevers and wildnesses, and forfeiture of all judgment and vigorous understanding. In these accidents, the best advice is to temper and allay our joys with some instant consideration of the vilest of our sins, the shamefulness of our disgraces, the most dolorous accidents of our lives, the worst of our fears, with meditation of death, or the terrors of doomsday, or the unimaginable miseries of damned and accursed spirits.[b] For such considerations as these are good instruments of sobriety, and are correctives to the malignity of excessive joys or temporal prosperities, which, like minerals, unless allayed by art, prey upon the spirits, and become the union of a contradiction, being turned into mortal medicines.

8. At this time "Jesus preached to the people from the ship," which, in the fancies and tropical discoursings of the old doctors, signifies the church, and declares, that the homilies of order and authority must be delivered from the oracle; they that preach must be sent, and God hath appointed tutors and instructors of our consciences by special designation and peculiar appointment: if they that preach do not make their sermons from the ship, their discourses either are the false murmurs of heretics and false shepherds, or else of thieves and invaders of authority, or corrupters of discipline and order. For God, that loves to hear us in special places, will also be heard himself by special persons; and since he sent his angels ministers to convey his purposes of old, then when "the law was ordained by angels, as by the hands of a mediator,"[c] now also he will send his servants, the sons of men, since the new law was ordained by the Son of man, who is the Mediator between God and man in the new covenant. And, therefore, in the ship Jesus preached, but he had first caused it "to put off from land;" to represent to us, that the ship in which we preach must be put off from the vulgar communities of men,[d] separate from the people, by the designation of special appointment and of special holiness; that is, they neither must be common men nor of common lives, but consecrated by order, and hallowed by holy living, lest the person want authority in destitution of a divine character, and his doctrine lose its energy and power when the life is vulgar, and hath nothing in it holy and extraordinary.

9. The holy Jesus, in the choice of his apostles, was resolute and determined to make election of persons bold and confident; (for so the Galileans were observed naturally to be, and Peter was the boldest of the twelve, and a good sword-man, till the spirit of his Master had fastened his sword within the scabbard, and charmed his spirit into quietness;) but he never chose any of the scribes and Pharisees, none of the doctors of the law, but persons ignorant and unlearned; which, in designs and institutions whose divinity is not demonstrated from other arguments, would seem an art of concealment and distrust. But in this, which derives its rays from the fountain of wisdom most openly and infallibly, it is a contestation against the powers of the world upon the interests of God, that he who does all the work might have all the glory, and in the productions in which he is fain to make the instruments themselves, and give them capacity and activity, every part of the operation, and causality, and effect, may give to God the same honour he had from the creation, for his being the only workman; with the addition of those degrees of excellency which, in the work of redemption of man, are beyond that of his creation and first being.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, Lord of the creatures, and Prince of the catholic church, to whom all creatures obey, in acknowledgment of thy supreme dominion, and all, according to thy disposition, co-operate to the advancement of thy kingdom, be pleased to order the affairs and accidents of the world, that all things in their capacity may do the work of the gospel, and co-operate to the good of the elect, and retrench the growth of vice, and advance the interests of virtue. Make all the states and orders of men disciples of thy holy institution: let princes worship thee, and defend religion; let thy clergy do thee honour by personal zeal, and vigilance

[b] Simul et quod gaudes et quod times contrahe.—SENECA.
[c] Gal. iii. 19.
[d] Χωρεῖν γὰρ τὸ ὅμοιον πρὸς ὅμοιον, ὅθεν καὶ μόνος ἱερεὺς ὁ σοφὸς λέγεται, μόνος θεοφιλὴς, μόνος εἰδὼς ἔυξασθαι· μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν, ὁ τὴν ἀξίαν μὴ συγχέων τῶν τιμωμένων, καὶ ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων.—HIEROCL. in Pythag.

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over their flocks; let all the world submit to thy sceptre, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgments, and revere thy laws: and, in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosures of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice and obey thy call, and entertain thy Holy Spirit, and improve my talents; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore, and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom; but be admitted into the societies of saints, and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE IX.

Of Repentance.

1. THE whole doctrine of the gospel is comprehended by the Holy Ghost in these two summaries, "faith and repentance;"[a] that those two potent and imperious faculties, which command our lower powers, which are the fountain of actions, occasion and capacity of laws, and the title to reward or punishment, the will and the understanding, that is, the whole man considered in his superior faculties, may become subjects of the kingdom, servants of Jesus, and heirs of glory. Faith supplies our imperfect conceptions, and corrects our ignorance, making us to distinguish good from evil, not only by the proportions of reason, and custom, and old laws, but by the new standard of the gospel; it teaches us all those duties which were enjoined us in order to a participation of mighty glories; it brings our understanding into subjection, making us apt to receive the Spirit for our guide, Christ for our master, the gospel for our rule, the laws of christianity for our measure of good and evil: and it supposes us naturally ignorant, and comes to supply those defects which, in our understandings, were left after the spoils of innocence and wisdom made in paradise upon Adam's prevarication, and continued and increased by our neglect, evil customs, voluntary deceptions, and infinite prejudices. And as faith presupposes our ignorance, so repentance presupposes our malice and iniquity. The whole design of Christ's coming, and the doctrines of the gospel, being to recover us from a miserable condition, from ignorance to spiritual wisdom, by the conduct of faith; and from a vicious, habitually depraved life, and ungodly manners, to the purity of the sons of God, by the instrument of repentance.

2. And this is a loud publication of the excellency and glories of the gospel, and the felicities of man over all the other instances of creation. The angels, who were more excellent spirits than human souls, were not comprehended and made safe within a covenant and provisions of repentance. Their first act of volition was their whole capacity of a blissful or a miserable eternity: they made their own sentence when they made their first election; and having such excellent knowledge, and no weaknesses to prejudge and trouble their choice, what they first did was not capable of repentance; because they had at first, in their intuition and sight, all which could afterwards bring them to repentance. But weak man, who knows first by elements, and, after long study, learns a syllable, and in good time gets a word, could not at first know all those things which were sufficient to determine his choice, but as he grew to understand more, saw more reasons to rescind his first elections. The angels had a full peremptory will, and a satisfied understanding, at first, and therefore were not to mend their first act by a second contradictory: but poor man hath a will always strongest when his understanding is weakest, and chooseth most when he is least able to determine; and, therefore, is most passionate in his desires, and follows his object with greatest earnestness, when he is blindest, and hath the least reason so to do. And therefore God, pitying man, begins to reckon his choices to be criminal just in the same degree as he gives him understanding. The violences and unreasonable actions of childhood are no more remembered by God, than they are understood by the child. The levities and passions of youth are not aggravated by the imputation of malice, but are sins of a lighter dye, because reason is not yet impressed, and marked upon them with characters and tincture in grain. But he who (when he may choose, because he understands) shall choose the evil, and reject the good, stands marked with a deep guilt, and hath no excuse left to him, but as his degrees of ignorance left his choice the more imperfect. And because every sinner, in the style of Scripture, is a fool, and hath an election as imperfect as is the action, that is, as great a declension from prudence as it is from piety, and the man understands as imperfectly as he practises; therefore God sent his Son to "take upon him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham,"[b] and to propound salvation upon such terms as were possible, that is, upon such a piety which relies upon experience, and trial of good and evil; and hath given us leave, if we choose amiss at first, to choose again, and choose better; Christ having undertaken to pay for the issues of our first follies, to make up the breach made by our first weaknesses and abused understandings.

3. But as God gave us this mercy by Christ, so he also revealed it by him. He first used the authority of a Lord, and a Creator, and a Lawgiver: he required obedience, indeed, upon reasonable terms, upon the instance of but a few commandments at first, which when he afterwards multiplied, he also appointed ways to expiate the smaller irregularities; but left them eternally bound without remedy, who should do any great violence or a crime. But then he bound them but to a temporal death. Only this, as an eternal death was also tacitly implied, so also a remedy was secretly ministered, and repentance particularly preached by homilies dis-

[a] Acts xx. 21.

[b] Heb. ii. 16.

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tinct from the covenant of Moses's law. The law allowed no repentance for greater crimes; "he that was convicted of adultery, was to die without mercy:"[c] but God pitied the miseries of man, and the inconveniences of the law, and sent Christ to suffer for the one, and remedy the other; "for so it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."[d] And now this is the last and only hope of man, who, in his natural condition, is imperfect, in his customs vicious, in his habits impotent and criminal. Because man did not remain innocent, it became necessary he should be penitent,[e] and that this penitence should, by some means, be made acceptable, that is, become the instrument of his pardon, and restitution of his hope. Which, because it is an act of favour, and depends wholly upon the Divine dignation, and was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, who was made, not only the Prophet and Preacher, but the Mediator of this new covenant and mercy; it was necessary we should become disciples of the holy Jesus, and servants of his institution; that is, run to him to be made partakers of the mercies of this new covenant, and accept of him such conditions as he should require of us.

4. This covenant is then consigned to us when we first come to Christ, that is, when we first profess ourselves his disciples and his servants, disciples of his doctrine, and servants of his institution; that is, in baptism, in which Christ, who died for our sins, makes us partakers of his death. "For we are buried by baptism into his death,"[f] saith St. Paul. Which was also represented in ceremony by the immersion appointed to be the rite of that sacrament. And then it is that God pours forth, together with the sacramental waters, a salutary and holy fountain of grace, to wash the soul from all its stains and impure adherences. And, therefore, this first access to Christ is, in the style of Scripture, called "regeneration, the new birth, redemption, renovation, expiation, or atonement with God, and justification."[g] And these words in the New Testament relate principally and properly to the abolition of sins committed before baptism. For we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past: to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness." And this is that which St. Paul calls "justification by faith," that "boasting might be excluded," and the grace of God by Jesus made exceeding glorious.[h] For this being the proper work of Christ, the first entertainment of a disciple, and manifestation of that state which is first given him as a favour, and next intended as a duty, is a total abolition of the precedent guilt of sin, and leaves nothing remaining that can condemn; we then freely receive the entire and perfect effect of that atonement which Christ made for us, we are put into a condition of innocence and favour. And this, I say, is done regularly in baptism, and St. Paul expresses it to this sense; after he had enumerated a series of vices subjected in many, he adds, "and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified."[i] There is nothing of the old guilt remanent; when "ye were washed, ye were sanctified," or, as the Scripture calls it in another place, "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation."[k]

5. For this grace was the formality of the covenant: "Repent, and believe the gospel.[l] Repent, and be converted," (so it is in St. Peter's sermon,) "and your sins shall be done away,"[m] that was the covenant. But that Christ chose baptism for its signature, appears in the parallel: "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins: for Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish."[n] The sanctification is integral, the pardon is universal and immediate.

6. But here the process is short; no more at first but this, "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins;"[o] which baptism, because it was speedily administered, and yet not without the preparatives of faith and repentance, it is certain those predispositions were but instruments of reception, actions of great facility, of small employment, and such as, supposing the person not unapt,[p] did confess the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and fulness of the redemption, and is called by the apostle, "a being justified freely."[q]

7. Upon this ground it is, that, by the doctrine of the church, heathen persons, "strangers from the covenant of grace," were invited to a confession of faith, and dereliction of false religions, with a promise, that, at the very first resignation of their persons to the service of Jesus, they should obtain full pardon.[r] It was St. Cyprian's counsel to old Demetrianus, "Now, in the evening of thy days, when thy soul is almost expiring, repent of thy sins, believe in Jesus, and turn christian; and although thou art almost in the embraces of death, yet thou

[c] Lev. xx. 10. [d] Luke xxiv. 46. 47.

[e] Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos.—HOR. lib. i. od. 34.

[f] Rom. vi. 4.

[g] 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. v. 1. Tit. iii. 5, 7. Rom. iii. 26. Gal. ii. 16.

[h] Rom. iii. 24–28. [i] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [k] 1 Pet. i. 18.

[l] Mark i. 15. [m] Acts iii. 19.

[n] Acts ii. 38. Mark xvi. 16. Eph. v. 25–27.

[o] *Φαίνεσθέ μοι οὐ κατ' ἄνθρωπον ζῶντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ἀποθανόντα, ἵνα πιστεύοντες εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος κοινωνοὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ γένησθε.*—IGNAT. ad Trall.

Εἶπον δὲ, δι' ὕδατος, καὶ πίστεως, καὶ ξύλου, οἱ προπαρασκευαζόμενοι, καὶ μετανοοῦντες ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτον, ἐκφεύξονται τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπέρχεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ κρίσιν.—JUST. MART. Dial. cum Tryph.

[p] Acts viii. 37. x. 47. and xvi. 15, 33. [q] Rom. iii. 24.

[r] Eadem est ratio laborantium in vinea quos dominus in parabola, Matt. xx. undecimâ demum horâ conduxerat, omnes æqualem sortem promerebantur. Ratio autem est, quia anteà vocati non erant: "Nemo nos conduxerat," verse 7. *Θέλει δικαιοπραγῆσαι ὁ λῃστὴς, ἀλλὰ προλαμβάνει ὁ θάνατος.* Cui respondet Christus, *Οὐ τὸ ἔργον περιμένω μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὴν πίστιν ἀπεδεξάμην.*—CYRIL. Hieros.

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over their flocks; let all the world submit to thy sceptre, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgments, and revere thy laws: and, in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosures of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice and obey thy call, and entertain thy Holy Spirit, and improve my talents; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore, and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom; but be admitted into the societies of saints, and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE IX.

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[illegible] the [illegible] ns, that our old [illegible], that the body of sin [illegible] that henceforth we should not [illegible] is, from the day of our baptism to [illegible] of our death. And therefore God, who [illegible] ws the weaknesses on our part, and yet the strictness and necessity of conserving baptismal grace by the covenant evangelical, hath appointed the auxiliaries of the Holy Spirit to be ministered to all baptized people in the holy rite of confirmation, that it might be made possible to be done by Divine aids, which is necessary to be done by the Divine commandments.

10. And this might not be improperly said to be the meaning of those words of our blessed Saviour, "He that speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him:" that is, those sins which were committed in infidelity, before we became disciples of the holy Jesus, are to be remitted in baptism and our first

[a] Acts iii. 19.

[b] Licèt latro veniam meruisset in fine de omni suo crimine, non tamen dedit baptizatis peccandi et perseverandi auctoritatem. Tunc enim baptizatus est, qui tunc primùm Christum in cruce confessus est. Pœnitentia enim, sit in extremo vitæ hiatu advenerit, sanat et liberat in ablutione baptismi. Illi autem qui, cùm potuerunt, nunquam converti voluerunt, confitentes cùm jam peccare nequeunt, non sic facilè acquirunt quod volunt.—S. Aug. cap. Nullus de Pœnit. dist. 7.

[u] Vide Part III. Consid. of Crucifix. of Jesus.

[x] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

[y] Luke i. 73, &c.

[z] Titus ii. 11, 12.

[a] Ib. ver. 13, 14.

[b] Rom. vi. 2—4.

[c] Ib. ver. 6.

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lities and aptnesses to a reconcilement, and
all our life we are working ourselves into that condition we had in baptism, and lost by our relapse. As the habit lessens, so does the guilt; as our virtues are imperfect, so is the pardon; and because our piety may be interrupted, our state is uncertain,[f] till our possibilities of sin are ceased, till our "fight is finished," and the victory therefore made sure because there is no more fight. And it is remarkable, that St. Peter gives counsel to live holily, in pursuance of our redemption, of our calling, and of our "escaping from that corruption that is in the world through lust," lest we lose the benefit of our purgation, to which, by way of antithesis, he opposes this: "Wherefore the rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure." And, "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."[g] Meaning, by the perpetuating our state of baptism and first repentance we shall never fall, but be in a sure estate; "our calling and election shall be sure."[h] But not, if we fall; "if we forget we were purged from our old sins;"[i] if we forfeit our "calling," we have also made our "election" unsure, movable, and disputable.

12. So that now the hopes of lapsed sinners rely upon another bottom. And, as in Moses's law there was no revelation of repentance, but yet the Jews had hopes in God, and were taught the succours of repentance, by the homilies of the prophets, and other accessory notices; so in the gospel the covenant was established upon faith and repentance, but it was consigned in baptism, and was verifiable only in the integrity of a following holy life according to the measures of a man; not perfect, but sincere; not faultless, but heartily endeavoured: but yet the mercy of God, in pardoning sinners lapsed after baptism, was declared to us by collateral and indirect occasions; by the sermons of the apostles, and the commentaries of apostolical persons, who understood the meaning of the Spirit, and the purposes of the Divine mercy, and those other significations of his will, which the blessed Jesus left record in other parts of his testament, as in annexed, besides the precise testament itself. certain, if, in the covenant of grace, there ame involution of an after-repentance, as present pardon upon past repentance and ctity, it is impossible to justify, that a holy and a persevering sanctity, is enjoined by the covenant of the gospel: if, I say, in its first intention, it be declared that we may as well, and upon the same terms, hope for pardon upon a recovery hereafter, as upon the perseverance in the present condition.

13. From these premises, we may soon understand what is the duty of a christian in all his life, even to pursue his own undertaking made in baptism, or his first access to Christ, and redemption of his person from the guilt and punishment of sins. The state of a christian is called in Scripture "regeneration, spiritual life, walking after the Spirit, walking in newness of life;" that is, "a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance." That repentance, which, tied up in the same ligament with faith, was the disposition of a christian to his regeneration and atonement, must have holy life in perpetual succession; for that is the apt and proper fruit of the first repentance which John the Baptist preached as an introduction to christianity, and as an entertaining the redemption by the blood of the covenant. And all that is spoken in the New Testament, is nothing but a calling upon us to do what we promised in our regeneration, to perform that which was the design of Christ, who therefore redeemed us, and "bare our

[d] Vitia catechumeno non imputantur fideli, imò et polygamia ante baptismum sacerdotibus non ponebat obicem. S. Hieron. in fin. Apol. I. contra Ruffin.
De sacramento enim agitur, non de peccato.—S. Aug. de Bono Conjugali.
Nam in baptismo omnia peccata dimittuntur.—Ca. Apost. 17. Concil. Eliber. cap. 30, 31.
Mundus post diluvium rursus delinquens igni destinatur: sicut et homo qui post baptismum delicta restaurat.—Tertul. de Baptis.

[e] Nunc hic dies aliam vitam adfert, alios mores postulat.
[f] Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera felix.
[g] 2 Pet. i. 4, 10. [h] Vide etiam Col. i. 21–23.
[i] 2 Pet. i. 9.

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sins in his own body, that we might die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."

14. This is that saying of St. Paul,[k] "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you." Plainly saying, that unless we pursue the state of holiness and christian communion, into which we were baptized when we received the grace of God, we shall fail of the state of grace, and never come to see the glories of the Lord. And a little before, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."[l] That is the first state of our redemption, that is "the covenant God made with us, to remember our sins no more, and to put his laws in our hearts and minds."[m] And this was done "when our bodies were washed with water, and our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," that is, in baptism. It remains then that we persist in the condition, that we may continue our title to the covenant; for so it follows, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for if we sin wilfully after the profession, there remains no more sacrifice:"[n] that is, if we hold not fast the profession of our faith, and continue not the condition of the covenant, but fall into a contrary state, we have forfeited the mercies of the covenant. So that all our hopes of blessedness, relying upon the covenant made with God in Jesus Christ, are ascertained upon us by "holding fast that profession," by retaining "our hearts" still "sprinkled from an evil conscience," by "following peace with all men, and holiness;" for, by not "failing of the grace of God," we shall not fail of our hopes, "the mighty price of our high calling;" but without all this, we shall never see the face of God.

15. To the same purpose are all those places of Scripture, which entitle us to Christ and the Spirit upon no other condition but a holy life, and a prevailing, habitual, victorious grace. "Know you not your own selves," brethren, "how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"[o] There are but two states of being in order to eternity, either a state of the inhabitation of Christ, or the state of reprobation: either "Christ is in us," or we "are reprobates." But what does that signify, to have "Christ dwelling in us?" That also we learn at the feet of the same doctor: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness."[p] The body of sin is mortified, and the life of grace is active, busy, and spiritual, in all them who are not in the state of reprobation. The parallel with that other expression of his, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."[q] If sin be vigorous, if it be habitual, if it be beloved, if it be not dead, or dying in us, we are not of Christ's portion, we belong not to him, nor he to us. For "whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God:"[r] that is, every regenerate person is in a condition, whose very being is a contradiction and an opposite design to sin. When he was regenerate, and born anew "of water and the Spirit, the seed of God," the original of piety, was put into him, and bidden to "increase and multiply." "The seed of God," (in St. John,) is the same with "the word" of God, (in St. James,) "by which he begat us;"[s] and as long as this remains, a regenerate person cannot be given up to sin; for when he is, he quits his baptism, he renounces the covenant, he alters his relation to God in the same degree as he enters into a state of sin.

16. And yet this discourse is no otherwise to be understood than according to the design of the thing itself and the purpose of God; that is, that it be a deep engagement and an effectual consideration for the necessity of a holy life; but at no hand let it be made an instrument of despair, nor an argument to lessen the influences of the Divine mercy. For although the nicety and limits of the covenant, being consigned in baptism, are fixed upon the condition of a holy and persevering uninterrupted sanctity; and our redemption is wrought but once, completed but once, we are but once absolutely, entirely, and presentially forgiven, and reconciled to God, this reconciliation being in virtue of the sacrifice, and this sacrifice applied in baptism is one, as "baptism is one," and as the sacrifice is one: yet the mercy of God, besides this great feast, hath fragments, which the apostles and ministers spiritual are to gather up in baskets, and minister to the after-needs of indigent and necessitous disciples.

17. And this we gather, as fragments are gathered, by respersed sayings, instances and examples of the Divine mercy recorded in holy Scripture. The holy Jesus commands us to "forgive our brother seventy times seven times," when he asks our pardon and implores our mercy; and since the Divine mercy is the pattern of ours, and is also procured by ours, the one being made the measure of the other, by way of precedent and by way of reward, God will certainly forgive us as we forgive our brother: and it cannot be imagined God should oblige us to give pardon oftener than he will give it himself, especially since he hath expressed ours to be a title of a proportionable reception of his; and hath also commanded us to ask pardon all days of our life, even in our daily offices, and to beg it in the measure and rule of our own charity and forgiveness to our brother. And therefore God, in his infinite wisdom, foreseeing our frequent relapses, and considering our infinite infirmities, appointed in his church an ordinary ministry of pardon; designing the minister to pray for sinners, and promising to accept him in that his advocation, or that he would open or shut heaven respectively to his act on earth; that is, he would hear his prayers, and verify his ministry, to whom he hath "committed the word of reconciliation." This became a duty to christian ministers, spiritual persons, that they should "restore a person overtaken in a fault,"[t] that is, reduce

[k] Heb. xii. 14, 15. [l] Heb. x. 22. [m] Ver. 16, 17.
[n] Heb. x. 23, 26. [o] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [p] Rom. viii. 10.
[q] Gal. v. 24. [r] 1 John iii. 9.
[s] James i. 18. [t] Gal. vi. 1.

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him to the condition he begins to lose; that they should "pray over sick persons,"[u] who are also commanded to "confess their sins;" and God hath promised, that "the sins they have committed shall be forgiven them." Thus St. Paul absolved the incestuous, excommunicate Corinthian; in the person of Christ he forgave him.[x] And this, also, is the confidence St. John taught the christian church, upon the stock of the excellent mercy of God, and propitiation of Jesus: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[y] Which discourse he directs to them who were christians, already initiated into the institution of Jesus. And the epistles which the Spirit sent to the seven Asian churches, and were particularly addressed to the bishops, the angels, of those churches, are exhortations, some to perseverance, some to repentance, that "they may return from whence they are fallen."[z] And the case is so with us, that it is impossible we should be actually and perpetually free from sin, in the long succession of a busy, and impotent, and a tempted conversation. And without these reserves of the Divine grace, and after-emanations from the mercy-seat, no man could be saved; and the death of Christ would become inconsiderable to most of his greatest purposes: for none should have received advantages but newly-baptized persons, whose albs of baptism served them also for a winding-sheet. And, therefore, our baptism, although it does consign the work of God presently to the baptized person in great, certain, and entire effect, in order to the remission of what is past, in case the catechumen be rightly disposed, or hinders not; yet it hath also influence upon the following periods of our life, and hath admitted us into a lasting state of pardon, to be renewed and actually applied by the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and all other ministries evangelical, and so long as our repentance is timely, active, and effective.[a]

18. But now, although it is infinitely certain, that the gates of mercy stand open to sinners after baptism; yet it is with some variety, and greater difficulty. He that renounces christianity, and becomes apostate from his religion, not by a seeming abjuration under a storm, but by a voluntary and hearty dereliction, he seems to have quitted all that grace which he had received when he was illuminated, and to have lost the benefits of his redemption and former expiation. And I conceive this is the full meaning of those words of St. Paul, which are of highest difficulty and latent sense; "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," &c. "if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance."[b] The reason is there subjoined, and more clearly explicated a little after: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins; for he hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace."[c] The meaning is diverse, according to the degrees of apostasy or relapse. They who fall away after they were once enlightened in baptism,[d] and felt all those blessed effects of the sanctification and the emanations of the Spirit, if it be into a contradictory state of sin and mancipation, and obstinate purposes to serve Christ's enemies; then "there remains nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment:" but if the backsliding be but the interruption of the first sanctity by a single act, or an unconformed, unresolved, unmalicious habit; then, also, "it is impossible to renew them unto repentance," viz. as formerly; that is, they can never be reconciled as before, integrally, fully, and at once, during this life. For that redemption and expiation was by baptism, into Christ's death; and there are no more deaths of Christ, nor any more such sacramental consignations of the benefit of it; "there is no more sacrifice for sins," but the redemption is one, as the sacrifice is one in whose virtue the redemption does operate. And, therefore, the Novatians, who were zealous men, denied to the first sort of persons the peace of the church, and remitted them to the Divine judgment. The church herself was sometimes almost as zealous against the second sort of persons lapsed into capital crimes, granting to them repentance but once; by such disciplines consigning this truth, That every recession from the state of grace, in which by baptism we were established and consigned, is a farther step from the possibilities of heaven, and so near a ruin, that the church thought them persons fit to be transmitted to a judicature immediately Divine; as supposing either her power to be too little, or the other's malice too great; or else the danger too violent, or the scandal insupportable. For concerning such persons, who once were pious, holy, and forgiven, (for so is every man and woman worthily and aptly baptized,) and afterwards fell into dissolution of manners, "extinguishing the Holy Ghost, doing despite to the Spirit of grace, crucifying again the Lord of life;" that is, returning to such a condition from which they were once recovered, and could not otherwise be so but by the death of our dearest Lord; I say, concerning such persons the Scripture speaks very suspiciously, and to the sense and signification of an infinite danger. For if the speaking a word "against the Holy Ghost be not to be pardoned, here nor here-

[u] James v. 14.

[x] Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος ἢ πρεσβύτερος τὸν ἐπιστρέφοντα ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας οὐ προσδέχεται, ἀλλὰ ἀποβάλλεται, καθαιρείσθω, ὅτι λυπεῖ Χριστὸν τὸν εἰπόντα, Χαρὰ γίνεται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐπὶ ἑνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι.—Can. Apost. 51.

Ὁ πιστευθεὶς παρὰ Θεοῦ λύειν καὶ δεσμεῖν, εἰ φιλανθρωπότερος γίνοιτο, οὐκ ἔσται καταγνώσεως ἄξιος.—S. BASIL. Can. Pœnit.

[y] 1 John i. 9.

[z] Apocal. ii. 5.

[a] See Discourse vi. of Baptism.

[b] Heb. vi. 4, 6.

[c] Heb. x. 26, 29.

[d] Quid igitur? rejecta est pœnitentia? Haudquaquam: sed renovatio per novum baptisma rejecta est. Renovatio namque solius lavacri est; ex hac causa ab apostolo dicitur lavacrum regenerationis et renovationis Spiritûs Sancti.—THEOPHYL. in hunc locum.

Idem aiunt S. Chrys. Ambros. Anselm. in 10. Heb.

[e] Collocavit in vestibulo pœnitentiam secundam quæ pulsantibus patefaciat, sed jam semel, quia jam secundò; sed ampliùs nunquam, quia proximè frustra. Hujus igitur pœnitentiæ secundæ et unius, &c.—TERTUL. lib. de Pœnit. c. 7, 9.

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after," what can we imagine to be the end of such an impiety, which "crucifies the Lord of life, and puts him to an open shame;" which "quenches the Spirit, doing despite to the Spirit of grace?" Certainly that is worse than speaking against him. And such is every person who falls into wilful apostasy from the faith, or does that violence to holiness which the other does to faith; that is, extinguishes the sparks of illumination, "quenches the Spirit," and is habitually and obstinately criminal in any kind. For the same thing that atheism was in the first period of the world, and idolatry in the second, the same is apostasy in the last; it is a state wholly contradictory to all our religious relation to God, according to the nature and manner of the present communication. Only this last, because it is more malicious, and a declension from a greater grace, is something like the fall of angels. And of this the emperor Julian was a sad example.

19. But as these are degrees immediately next, and a little less; so the hopes of pardon are the more visible. Simon Magus spake a word, or at least thought, against the Holy Ghost; he "thought he was to be bought with money." Concerning him, St. Peter pronounced, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity: yet repent, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."[f] Here the matter was of great difficulty; but yet there was a possibility left, at least no impossibility of recovery declared. And therefore St. Jude bids us, "of some to have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;"[g] meaning, that their condition is only not desperate. And still in descent, retaining the same proportion, every lesser sin is easier pardoned, as better consisting with the state of grace: the whole Spirit is not destroyed, and the body of sin is not introduced: Christ is not quite ejected out of possession, but, like an oppressed prince, still continues his claim; and such is his mercy, that he will still do so, till all be lost, or that he is provoked by too much violence, or that antichrist is put in substitution, and "sin reigns in our mortal body." So that I may use the words of St. John: "These things I write unto you, that you sin not. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."[h] That is plainly, Although the design of the gospel be, that we should erect a throne for Christ to reign in our spirits, and this doctrine of innocence be therefore preached, that we sin not; yet if one be overtaken in fault, despair not; Christ is our Advocate, and he is the propitiation: he did propitiate the Father by his death, and the benefit of that we receive at our first access to him; but then he is our Advocate too, and prays perpetually for our perseverance or restitution respectively. But his purpose is, and he is able so to do, "to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory."

20. This consideration I intend should relate to all christians of the world: and although, by the present custom of the church, we are baptized in our infancy, and do not actually reap that fruit of present pardon, which persons of a mature age in the primitive church did, (for we yet need it not, as we shall when we have past the calentures of youth, which was the time in which the wisest of our fathers in Christ chose for their baptism, as appears in the instance of St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and divers others,) yet we must remember, that there is a baptism of the Spirit as well as of water: and whenever this happens, whether it be together with that baptism of water, as usually it was when only men and women of years of discretion were baptized; or whether it be ministered in the rite of confirmation, which is an admirable suppletory of an early baptism, and intended by the Holy Ghost for a corroborative of baptismal grace, and a defensative against danger; or that, lastly, it be performed by an internal and merely spiritual ministry, when we, by acts of our own election, verify the promise made in baptism, and so bring back the rite, by receiving the effect of baptism; that is, whenever the "filth of our flesh is washed away," and that we have "the answer of a pure conscience towards God," which St. Peter affirms to be the true baptism, and which, by the purpose and design of God, it is expected we should not defer longer than a great reason or a great necessity enforces; when our sins are first expiated, and the sacrifice and death of Christ is made ours, and we made God's by a more immediate title (which at some time or other happens to all christians, that pretend to any hopes of heaven); then let us look to our standing, and "take heed lest we fall. When we once have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," that is, when we are redeemed by an actual mercy and presential application, which every christian that belongs to God is at some time or other of his life; then a fall into a deadly crime is highly dangerous, but a relapse into a contrary estate is next to desperate.

21. I represent this sad, but most true doctrine, in the words of St. Peter: "If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."[i] So that a relapse, after a state of grace, into a state of sin, into confirmed habits, is to us a great sign, and possibly in itself it is more than a sign, even a state, of reprobation and final abscission.[k]

[f] Acts viii. 20, 22, 23.
[g] Ver. 22, 23.
[h] 1 John ii. 1, 2.
[i] 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
[k] ——Neque amissos colores
Lana refert medicata fuco:
Nec vera virtus, cùm semel excidit,
Curat reponi deterioribus.—HOR. lib. iii. od. 5.

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22. The sum of all is this. There are two states of like opposite terms. First, "Christ redeems us from our vain conversation," and reconciles us to God, putting us into an entire condition of pardon, favour, innocence, and acceptance; and becomes our Lord and King, his Spirit dwelling and reigning in us. The opposite state to this, is that which in Scripture is called a "crucifying the Lord of life, a doing despite to the Spirit of grace, a being entangled in the pollutions of the world;" the apostasy, or falling away; an impotency, or disability to do good, viz. of such who "cannot cease from sin;"[l] who are slaves of sin, and in whom "sin reigns in their bodies." This condition is a full and integral deletery of the first; it is such a condition, which, as it hath no holiness or remanent affections to virtue, so it hath no hope or revelation of a mercy, because all that benefit is lost which they received by the death of Christ; and the first being lost, "there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment." But between these two states, stand all those imperfections and single delinquencies, those slips and falls, those parts of recession and apostasy, those grievings of the Spirit: and so long as any thing of the first state is left, so long we are within the covenant of grace, so long we are within the ordinary limits of mercy and the Divine compassion; we are in possibilities of recovery, and the same sacrifice of Christ hath its power over us; Christ is in his possession, though he be disturbed: but then our restitution consists upon the only condition of a renovation of our integrity; as are the degrees of our innocence, so are our degrees of confidence.

23. Now, because the intermedial state is divisible, various, successive, and alterable; so also is our condition of pardon. Our flesh shall no more return as that of a little child; our wounds shall never be perfectly cured; but a scar, and pain, and danger of a relapse, shall for ever afflict us; our sins shall be pardoned by parts and degrees, to uncertain purposes, but with certain danger of being recalled again; and the pardon shall never be consummate, till that day in which all things have their consummation.

24. And this is evident to have been God's usual dealing with all those upon whom his name is called. God pardoned David's sins of adultery and murder; but the pardon was but to a certain degree, and in a limited expression: "God hath taken away thy sin; thou shalt not die." But this pardon was as imperfect as his condition was: "Nevertheless, the child that is born unto thee, that shall die."[m] Thus God pardoned the Israelites, at the importunity of Moses, and yet threatened to visit that sin upon them in the day of visitation. And so it is in christianity: when once we have broken and discomposed the golden chain of vocation, election, and justification, which are entire links and methodical periods of our happiness, when we first give up our names to Christ, for ever after our condition is imperfect; we have broken our covenant, and we must be saved by the excrescences and overflowings of mercy. Our whole endeavour must be, to be reduced to the state of our baptismal innocence and integrity, because in that the covenant was established. And since our life is full of defailances, and all our endeavours can never make us such as Christ made us, and yet upon that condition our hopes of happiness were established; I mean, of remaining such as he had made us: as are the degrees of our restitution and access to the first federal condition, so also are the degrees of our pardon. But as it is always in imperfection during this life, and subject to change and defailance; so also are the hopes of our felicity; never certain till we are taken from all danger; never perfect till all that is imperfect in us is done away.[n]

25. And, therefore, in the present condition of things, our pardon was properly expressed by David, and St. Paul, by "a covering,"[o] and "a not imputing."[p] For because the body of sin dies divisibly, and fights perpetually, and disputes with hopes of victory, and may also prevail, all this life is a condition of suspense; our sin is rather covered, than properly pardoned; God's wrath is suspended, not satisfied; the sin is not to all purposes of anger imputed, but yet is in some sense remanent, or at least lies ready at the door. Our condition is a state of imperfection; and every degree of imperfection brings a degree of recession from the state Christ put us in; and every recession from our innocence is also an abatement of our confidence: the anger of God hovers over our head, and breaks out into temporal judgments; and he retracts them again, and threatens worse, according as we approach to or retire from that first innocence, which was the first entertainment of a christian, and the crown of the evangelical covenant. Upon that we entertained the mercies of redemption; and God established it upon such an obedience, which is a constant, perpetual, and universal sincerity and endeavour; and as we perform our part, so God verifies his, and not only gives a great assistance by the perpetual influences of his Holy Spirit, by which we are consigned to the day of redemption, but also takes an account of obedience, not according to the standard of the law and an exact scrutiny, but by an evangelical proportion; in which we are, on one side, looked upon as persons already redeemed and assisted, and therefore highly engaged; and on the other side, as compassed about with infirmities and enemies, and therefore much pitied. So that, as at first, our "calling and election" is presently good, and shall remain so, if we make it sure; so if we once prevaricate it, we are rendered then full of hazard, difficulty, and uncertainty, and we must, with pains and sedulity, "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" first, by preventing a fall; or afterwards, by returning to that excellent condition from whence we have departed.

26. But although the pardon of sins after baptism be, during this life, difficult, imperfect, and revocable; yet because it is to great effects for the

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 14.
[m] 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.
[n] Μήπω μέγαν εἴπῃς πρὶν τελευτήσαντ' ἴδῃς.—SOPHOCL.
[o] Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.
[p] Rom. iv. 7.

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present, and in order to a complete pardon in the day of judgment, we are next to inquire, what are the parts of duty to which we are obliged, after such prevarications which usually interrupt the state of baptismal innocence, and the life of the Spirit. St. John gives this account: "If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have communion one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin."[q] This state of duty St. Paul calls, "a casting off the works of darkness, a putting on the armour of light, a walking honestly, a putting on the Lord Jesus Christ."[r] And to it he confronts, "making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." St. Peter, describing the duty of a christian, relates the proportion of it as high as the first precedent, even God himself: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, in all manner of conversation: not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts."[s] And again: "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"[t] And St. John, with the same severity and perfection: "Every one that hath this hope," (that is, every one who either does not, or hath no reason to despair,) "purifieth himself, even as God is pure;"[u] meaning, that he is pure by a divine purity, which God hath prescribed as an imitation of his holiness, according to our capacities and possibilities.

That purity must needs be "a laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings;"[x] so St. Peter expresses it: "a laying aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset us;"[y] so St. Paul. This is to "walk in the light, as he is in the light, for in him is no darkness at all;"[z] which we have then imitated, when we have "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts;"[a] that is, so as we are "not held by them," that we take them for our enemies, for the object and party of our contestation and spiritual fight, "when we contend earnestly" against them, "and resist them unto blood," if need be; that is being "pure as he is pure." But besides this positive rejection of all evil, and perpetually contesting against sin, we must pursue the interests of virtue and an active religion.

27. "And besides this," saith St. Peter, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."[b] All this is an evident prosecution of the first design, the holiness and righteousness of a whole life; the being clear from all spots and blemishes, a being pure, and so presented unto Christ: for upon this the covenant being founded, to this all industries must endeavour, and arrive in their proportions. "For if these things be in you and abound, they shall make that you be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins;"[c] that is, he hath lost his baptismal grace, and is put from the first state of his redemption, towards that state which is contradictory and destructive of it.

28. Now, because all these things are in latitude, distance, and divisibility, and only enjoin a sedulity and great endeavour, all that we can dwell upon is this, That he who endeavours most is most secure, and every degree of negligence is a degree of danger; and although in the intermedial condition, between the two states of christianity and a full impiety, there is a state of recovery and possibility, yet there is danger in every part of it; and it increases according as the deflexion and irregularity comes to its height, position, state, and finality. So that we must "give all diligence to work out our salvation," and it would ever be "with fear and trembling:" with fear, that we do not lose our innocence; and with trembling, if we have lost it, for fear we never recover, or never be accepted. But holiness of life and uninterrupted sanctity, being the condition of our salvation, the ingredient of the covenant, we must proportion our degrees of hope, and confidence of heaven, according as we have obtained degrees of innocence, or perseverance, or restitution. Only this: as it is certain he is in a state of reprobation who lives unto sin, that is, whose actions are habitually criminal, who gives more of his consent to wickedness than to virtue; so it is also certain he is not in the state of God's favour and sanctification, unless he lives unto righteousness; that is, unless his desires, and purposes, and endeavours, and actions, and customs, are spiritual, holy, sanctified, and obedient. When sin is dead, and the Spirit is life; when the lusts of the flesh are mortified, and the heart is purged from an evil conscience, and we abound in a whole system of christian virtues; when our hearts are right to God, and with our affections and our wills we love God, and keep his commandments; when we do not only "cry, Lord, Lord," but also "do his will;" then "Christ dwells in us," and we in Christ. Now let all this be taken in the lowest sense that can be imagined, all, I say, which out of Scripture I have transcribed; "casting away every weight, laying aside all malice, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, crucifying the old man with all his affections and lusts, and then having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust;" besides this, "adding virtue to virtue till all righteousness be fulfilled in us, walking in the light, putting on the Lord Jesus, purifying ourselves as God is pure, following peace with all men and holiness, resisting unto blood, living in the Spirit, being holy in all manner of conversation as he is holy, being careful and excellent in all conversation

[q] 1 John i. 6, 7. [r] Rom. xiii. 12–14.
[s] 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. [t] 2 Pet. iii. 11. [u] 1 John iii. 3.
[x] 1 Pet. ii. 1. [y] Heb. xii. 1. [z] 1 John i. 5, 7.
[a] 2 Pet. i. 4. [b] Ibid. ver. 5, &c.
Veri boni aviditas tuta est. Quid sit istud, interrogas, aut unde subeat? dicam: ex bona conscientia, ex honestis consiliis, ex rectis actionibus, ex contemptu fortuitorum, ex placido vitæ et continuo tenore unam prementis viam.—SEN. ep. 23.
[c] 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.

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and godliness;" all this, being a pursuit of the first design of Christ's death, and our reconcilement, can mean no less but that, 1. We should have in us no affection to a sin; of which we can best judge, when we never choose it, and never fall under it but by surprise, and never lie under it at all, but instantly recover, judging ourselves severely: and, 2. That we should choose virtue with great freedom of spirit and alacrity, and pursue it earnestly, integrally,[d] and make it the business of our lives:[e] and that, 3. The effect of this be, that sin be crucified in us, and the desires to it dead, flat, and useless; and that our desires of serving Christ be quick-spirited, active, and effective, inquisitive for opportunities, apprehensive of the offer, cheerful in the action, and persevering in the employment.

29. Now let a prudent person imagine what infirmities and oversights can consist with a state thus described, and all that does no violence to the covenant; God pities us, and calls us not to an account for what morally cannot, or certainly will not, with great industry, be prevented.[f] But whatsoever is inconsistent with this condition is an abatement from our hopes, as it is a retiring from our duty, and is, with greater or less difficulty, cured, as are the degrees of its distance from that condition which Christ stipulated with us, when we became his disciples. For we are just so restored to our state of grace and favour, as we are restored to our state of purity and holiness. Now this redintegration, or renewing of us into the first condition, is also called repentance, and is permitted to all persons who still remain within the powers and possibilities of the covenant, that is, who are not in a state contradictory to the state and portion of grace; but with a difficulty increased by all circumstances, and incidences, of the crime and person. And this I shall best represent in repeating these considerations: 1. Some sins are past hopes of pardon in this life; 2. All that are pardoned are pardoned by parts, revocably and imperfectly during this life, not quickly nor yet manifestly; 3. Repentance contains in it many operations, parts, and employments, its terms and purpose being to redintegrate our lost condition, that is, in a second and less perfect sense, but, as much as in such circumstances we can, to verify our first obligations of innocence and holiness, in all manner of conversation and godliness.

30. Concerning the first, it is too sad a consideration to be too dogmatical and conclusive in it; and, therefore, I shall only recall those expresses of Scripture which may, without envy, decree the article: such as are those of St. Paul, that there is a certain sort of men, whom he twice describes, whom "it is impossible to renew again unto repentance;" or those of St. Peter, such whose "latter end is worse than the beginning, because, after they once had escaped the pollutions of the world, they are entangled therein;" such who, as our blessed Saviour threatens, "shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come." For there is an unpardonable estate, by reason of its malice and opposition to the covenant of grace; and there is a state unpardonable, because the time of repentance is past. There are days and periods of grace: "If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day," said the weeping Saviour of the world to foreknown and determined Jerusalem. When God's decrees are gone out, they are not always revocable: and, therefore, it was a great caution of the apostle, that we should "follow peace and holiness, and look diligently that we fall not from the grace of God, lest any of us become like Esau, to whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears;"[g] meaning, that we also may put ourselves into a condition, when it shall be impossible we should be renewed unto repentance: and those are they "who sin a sin unto death, for whom" we have, from the apostle, no encouragement "to pray."[h] And these are in so general and conclusive terms described in Scripture, that every persevering sinner hath great reason to suspect himself to be in the number: if he endeavours, as soon as he thinks of it, to recover, it is the best sign he was not arrived so far; but he that liveth long in a violent and habitual course of sin, is at the margin and brim of that state of final reprobation; and some men are in it before they be aware, and to some God reckons their days swifter, and their periods shorter. The use I make of this consideration is, that if any man hath reason to suspect, or to be certain, that his time of repentance is past, it is most likely to be a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, a life contrary to the mercies and grace of the evangelical covenant; for he hath provoked God as long as he could, and rejected the offers of grace as long as he lived, and refused virtue till he could not entertain her, and hath done all those things which a person rejected from hopes of repentance can easily be imagined to have done. And if there be any time of rejection, although it may be earlier, yet it is also certainly the last.

31. Concerning the second, I shall add this to the former discourse of it, that perfect pardon of sins is not in this world at all, after the first emission and great efflux of it in our first regeneration. During this life we are in imperfection, minority, and under conditions, which we have prevaricated; and our recovery is in perpetual flux, in heightenings and declensions, and we are highly uncertain of our acceptation, because we are not certain of our restitution and innocence; we know not whether we have done all that is sufficient to repair the breach made in the first state of favour and baptismal grace. But "he that is dead," saith St. Paul, "is justified from sin;"[i] not till then. And therefore, in the doctrine of the most learned Jews, it is affirmed: "He that is guilty of the profanation of the name of God, he shall not interrupt the apparent malignity of it by

[d] Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu peculiari.

[e] Χρόνοι δίκαιον ἄνδρα δείκνυσιν μόνοι.
Κακὸν δὲ κἂν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γνοίης μιᾷ.—SOPHOCL. Œd. Tyr.

[f] Illud enim esset, (quod apud Diodorum Siculum,) Τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καὶ κοινῆς ἀσθενείας ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι, ἕως ἂν τις ἀναμαρτήτους κολάζῃ, τὸ μέτρον ὑπερβαίνει τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐπανορθώσεως. Sopater dixit dissimulanda τὰ μικρὰ καὶ συνήθη τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων. Malè hoc; nisi in quantum vitari non possunt.

[g] Heb. xii. 14–17.

[h] 1 John v. 16.

[i] Rom. vi. 7.

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his present repentance, nor make atonement in the day of expiation, nor wash the stains away by chastising of himself; but during his life it remains wholly in suspense, and, before death, is not extinguished:" according to the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "This iniquity shall not be blotted out till ye die, saith the Lord of hosts."[k] And some wise persons have affirmed, that Jacob related to this in his expression and appellatives of God, whom he called "the God of Abraham, and the fear of his father Isaac,"[l] because, as the doctors of the Jews tell us, Abraham, being dead, was ascribed into the final condition of God's family; but Isaac, being living, had apprehensions of God, not only of a pious, but also of a tremulous fear: he was not sure of his own condition, much less of the degrees of his reconciliation, how far God had forgiven his sins, and how far he had retained them. And it is certain, that if every degree of the Divine favour be not assured by a holy life, those sins, of whose pardon we were most hopeful, return in as full vigour and clamorous importunity as ever, and are made more vocal by the appendant ingratitude, and other accidental degrees. And this Christ taught us by a parable: for as the lord made his uncharitable servant pay all that debt which he had formerly forgiven him; even "so will God do to us, if we, from our hearts, forgive not one another their trespasses."[m] "Behold the goodness and severity of God," saith St. Paul: "on them which fell, severity; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in that goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off. For this is my covenant which I shall make with them, when I shall take away their sins."[n] And if this be true in those sins which God certainly hath forgotten, such as were all those which were committed before our illumination; much rather is it true in those which we committed after, concerning whose actual and full pardon we cannot be certain without a revelation. So that our pardon of sins, when it is granted after the breach of our covenant, is just so secure as our perseverance is: concerning which, because we must ascertain it as well as we can, but ever with fear and trembling, so also is the estate of our pardon hazardous, conditional, revocable, and uncertain; and, therefore, the best of men do, all their lives, ask pardon, even of those sins for which they have wept bitterly, and done the sharpest and severest penance. And, if it be necessary, we pray that we may not enter into temptation, because temptation is full of danger, and the danger may bring a sin, and the sin may ruin us: it is also necessary that we understand the condition of our pardon to be, as is the condition of our person, variable as will, sudden as affections, alterable as our purposes, revocable as our own good intentions, and then made as ineffective as our inclinations to good actions. And there is no way to secure our confidence and our hope, but by being perfect, and holy, and pure, as our heavenly Father is; that is, in the sense of human capacity, free from the habits of all sin, and active, and industrious, and continuing in the ways of godliness. For upon this only the promise is built, and by our proportion to this state we must proportion our confidence; we have no other revelation. Christ reconciled us to his Father upon no other conditions, and made the covenant upon no other articles, but of a holy life, in obedience universal and perpetual: and the abatements of the rigorous sense of the words, as they are such as may infinitely testify and prove his mercy, so they are such as must secure our duty and habitual graces; an industry manly, constant, and christian: and because these have so great latitude, (and to what degrees God will accept our returns, he hath no where punctually described,) he that is most severe in his determination does best secure himself, and, by exacting the strictest account of himself, shall obtain the easier scrutiny at the hands of God. The use I make of this consideration, is to the same purpose with the former: for if every day of sin, and every criminal act, is a degree of recess from the possibilities of heaven, it would be considered at how great distance a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, may apprehend himself to stand for mercy and pardon: and since the terms of restitution must, in labour, and in extension of time, or intention of degrees, be of value great enough to restore him to some proportion or equivalence with that state of grace from whence he is fallen, and upon which the covenant was made with him; how impossible, or how near to impossible, it will appear to him to go so far and do so much in that state, and in those circumstances of disability.

32. Concerning the third particular, I consider that repentance, as it is described in Scripture, is a system of holy duties, not of one kind, not properly consisting of parts, as if it were a single grace; but it is the reparation of that estate into which Christ first put us, "a renewing us in the spirit of our mind," so the apostle calls it; and the Holy Ghost hath taught this truth to us by the implication of many appellatives, and also by express discourses. For there is in Scripture a "repentance to be repented of,"[o] and a "repentance never to be repented of."[p] The first is mere sorrow for what is past, an ineffective trouble, producing nothing good; such as was the repentance of Judas, "he repented, and hanged himself;" and such was that of Esau, when it was too late; and so was the repentance of the five foolish virgins: which examples tell us also when ours is an impertinent and ineffectual repentance. To this repentance pardon is no where promised in Scripture. But there is a repentance which is called "conversion, or amendment of life," a repentance productive of holy fruits, such as the Baptist and our blessed Saviour preached, such as himself also propounded in the example of the Ninevites;[q] they "repented at the preaching of Jonah," that is, "they fasted, they covered them in

[k] Isaiah xxii. 14.
[l] Gen. xxxi. 42.
[m] Matt. xviii. 35.
[n] Rom. xi. 22, 27.
[o] Μεταμέλεια.
[p] Μετάνοια. Μετάμεληθεις ἐπίστρεψε, cui in Act. Apost. opponitur μετανοήσατε οὖν καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts iii. 19. Huic enim promittitur peccatorum remissio in seq. εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας.
[q] Matt. xii. 41.

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sackcloth, they cried mightily unto God, yea, they turned every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands."[r] And this was it that appeased God in that instance. "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, and did it not."

33. The same character of repentance we find in the prophet Ezekiel: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die."[s] And in the gospel, repentance is described with as full and entire comprehensions as in the old prophets. For faith and repentance are the whole duty of the gospel. Faith, when it is in conjunction with a practical grace, signifies an intellectual.[t] Faith signifies the submission of the understanding to the institution; and repentance includes all that whole practice which is the entire duty of a christian, after he hath been overtaken in a fault. And, therefore, repentance first includes a renunciation and abolition of all evil, and then also enjoins a pursuit of every virtue, and that till they arrive at an habitual confirmation.

34. Of the first sense are all those expressions of Scripture which imply repentance to be the deletory of sins. "Repentance from dead works,"[u] St. Paul affirms to be the prime fundamental of the religion; that is, conversion, or returning from dead works: for unless repentance be so construed, it is not good sense. And this is therefore highly verified, because repentance is intended to set us into the condition of our first undertaking, and articles covenanted with God. And therefore it is "a redemption of the time," that is, a recovering what we lost, and making it up by our doubled industry. "Remember whence thou art fallen, repent," that is, return, "and do thy first works," said the Spirit to the angel of the church of Ephesus, or else "I will remove thy candlestick, except thou repent."[x] It is a restitution; "if a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one,"[y] that is, put him where he was. And then, that repentance also implies a doing all good, is certain by the sermon of the Baptist, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance:"[z] "Do thy first works," was the sermon of the Spirit: "Laying aside every weight, and the sin that easily encircles us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us;" so St. Paul taught. And St. Peter gives charge, that when we "have escaped the corruptions of the world, and of lusts,"[a] besides this, we "give all diligence" to acquire the rosary and conjugation of christian virtues. And they are proper effects, or rather constituent parts, of a holy repentance. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul, "not to be repented of:"[b] and that ye may know what is signified by repentance, behold the product was "carefulness, clearing of themselves, indignation, fear, vehement desires, zeal, and revenge;" to which if we add the epithet of holy, (for these were the results of a godly sorrow, and the members of a repentance not to be repented of,) we are taught that repentance, besides the purging out the malice of iniquity, is also a sanctification of the whole man, a turning nature into grace, passions into reason, and the flesh into spirit.

35. To this purpose I reckon those phrases of Scripture calling it a "renewing of our mind;"[c] a "renewing of the Holy Ghost;"[d] a "cleansing of our hands, and purifying our hearts,"[e] that is, a becoming holy in our affections and righteous in our actions; a "transformation,"[f] or utter change; a "crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[g] a "mortified"[h] state, a "purging out the old leaven, and becoming a new conspersion;"[i] a "waking out of sleep,"[j] and walking honestly, as in the day;"[k] a "being born again,"[l] and being "born from above;" a "new life." And I consider that these preparative actions of repentance, such as are sorrow, and confession of sins, and fasting, and exterior mortifications, and severities, are but forerunners of repentance,[m] some of the retinue, and they are of the family, but they no more complete the duty of repentance than the harbingers are the whole court, or than the fingers are all the body. There "is more joy in heaven," said our blessed Saviour, "over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." There is no man but needs a tear and a sorrow, even for his daily weaknesses, and possibly they are the instrumental expiations of our sudden, and frequent, and lesser surprises of imperfection; but the "just persons need no repentance," that is, need no inversion of state, no transformation from condition to condition, but from the less to the more perfect the best man hath. And, therefore, those are vain persons who, when they "owe God a hundred, will write fourscore, or a thousand, will write fifty." It was the saying of an excellent person, that "repentance is the beginning of philosophy, a flight and renunciation of evil works and words, and the first preparation and entrance into a life which is never to be repented of: and, therefore, a penitent is not taken with umbrages and appearances, nor quits a real good for an imaginary, nor chooses evil for fear of enemies and adverse accidents; but peremptorily conforms his sentence to the Divine laws, and submits his whole life in a

[r] Jonah iii. 8, 10. [s] Ezek. xviii. 27. and xxxiii. 15.

[t] Διόπερ οὐκ ἀποστατέον οὐδενὸς τῶν χρησίμων διὰ τὰς προφαινομένας δυσχερείας. προσακτέον δὲ τὴν ἕξιν, ᾗ πάντα τὰ καλὰ γίνεται θηρατὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.—POLYBIUS.

Vide etiam Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. ii. ubi ad eundem sensum definit pœnitentiam.

[u] Μετάνοια ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν ἔργων, Heb. vi. 1.

[x] Apocal. ii. 5. [y] Gal. vi. 1. [z] Matt. iii. 8.

[a] 2 Pet. i. 4, 5. [b] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [c] Rom. xii. 2.

[d] Tit. iii. 5. [e] Jam. iv. 8. [f] Rom. xii. 2.

[g] Gal. v. 24. [h] Col. iii. 5. [i] 1 Cor. v. 7.

[j] Eph. v. 14. Rom. xiii. 11. [k] Rom. xiii. 13.

[l] 1 John iii. 3.

[m] ——Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
Eradenda cupidinis
Pravi sunt elementa; et teneræ nimis
Mentes asperioribus
Formandæ studiis.—HOR. lib. iii. od. 21.

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conformity with them."[n] He that said those excellent words had not been taught the christian institution, but it was admirable reason and deep philosophy, and most consonant to the reasonableness of virtue, and the proportions and designs of repentance, and no other than the doctrine of christian philosophy.

36. And it is considerable, since in Scripture there is a repentance mentioned, which is impertinent and ineffectual as to the obtaining pardon, a repentance implied which is to be repented of, and another expressed which is "never to be repented of, and this is described to be a new state of life, a whole conversion and transformation of the man; it follows, that whatsoever, in any sense, can be called repentance, and yet is less than this new life, must be that ineffective repentance. A sorrow is a repentance, and all the acts of dolorous expression are but the same sorrow in other characters, and they are good when they are parts or instruments of the true repentance; but when they are the whole repentance, that repentance is no better than that of Judas, nor more prosperous than that of Esau. Every sorrow is not a "godly sorrow," and that which is, is but instrumental, and in order to repentance. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul; that is, it does its share towards it, as every grace does toward the pardon, as every degree of pardon does toward heaven. By "godly sorrow," it is probable St. Paul means the same thing which the school hath since called contrition; a grief proceeding from a holy principle, from our love of God, and anger that we have offended him: and yet this is a great way off from that repentance without the performance of which we shall certainly perish: but no contrition alone is remissive of sins, but as it cooperates towards the integrity of our duty. "Cum conversus ingemuerit," is the prophet's expression. When a man "mourns, and turns from all his evil way, that is a godly sorrow," and that is repentance too:[o] but the tears of a dolorous person, though running over with great effusions, and shed in great bitterness, and expressed in actions of punitive justice, all being but the same sense in louder language, being nothing but the expressions of sorrow, are good only as they tend further; and if they do, they may, by degrees, bring us to repentance, and that repentance will bring us to heaven; but of themselves they may as well make the sea swell beyond its margin, or water and refresh the sun-burnt earth, as move God to mercy, and pierce the heavens. But then to this consideration we may add, that a sorrow upon a death-bed, after a vicious life, is such as cannot easily be understood to be ordinarily so much as the beginning of virtue, or the first instance towards a holy life. For he that till then retained his sins, and now, when he is certain and believes he shall die, or is fearful lest he should, is sorrowful that he hath sinned, is only sorrowful because he is like to perish: and such a sorrow may perfectly consist with as great an affection to sin, as ever the man had in the highest caresses and invitation of his lust. For even then, in certain circumstances, he would have refused to have acted his greatest temptation. The boldest and most pungent lust would refuse to be satisfied in the market-place, or with a dagger at his heart; and the greatest intemperance would refuse a pleasant meal, if he believed the meat to be mixed with poison: and yet this restraint of appetite is no abatement of the affection, any more than the violent fears which, by being incumbent upon the death-bed penitent, make him grieve for the evil consequents more than to hate the malice and irregularity. He that does not grieve till his greatest fear presses him hard, and damnation treads upon his heels, feels indeed the effects of fear, but can have no present benefit of his sorrow, because it had no natural principle, but a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause, inconsistent with a free, placid, and moral election. But this I speak only by way of caution: for God's mercy is infinite, and can, if he please, make it otherwise. But it is not good to venture, unless you have a promise.

37. The same also I consider concerning the purpose of a new life, which that any man should judge to be repentance, that duty which restores us, is more unreasonable than to think sorrow will do it. For as a man may sorrow, and yet never be restored; (and he may sorrow so much the more, because he shall never be restored, as Esau did, as the five foolish virgins did, and as many more do;) so he that purposes to lead a new life, hath convinced himself that the duty is undone, and therefore his pardon not granted, nor his condition restored. As a letter is not a word, nor a word an action; as an embryo is not a man, nor the seed the fruit; so is a purpose of obedience but the element of repentance, the first imaginations of it differing from the grace itself as a disposition from a habit, or (because itself will best express itself) as the purpose does from the act.[p] For either a holy life is necessary, or it is not necessary. If it be not, why does any man hope to "escape the wrath to come," by resolving to do an unnecessary thing? or if he does not purpose it, when he pretends he does, that is a mocking of God, and that is a great way from being an instrument of his restitution. But if a holy life be necessary, as it is certain by infinite testimonies of Scriptures, it is the "unum necessarium," the one great necessary; it cannot reasonably be thought that any thing less than doing it shall serve our turns. That which is only in pur-

[n] Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυγὴ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἡ πρώτη παρασκευὴ—διὸ οὔτε προσδοκίαις τῶν λεγομένων ἀγαθῶν τὸ ὄντως ἀγαθὸν ἂν παρίδῃ, οὔτε φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται· ἐστώσῃ δὲ τῇ γνώμῃ πρὸς τοὺς θείους κανόνας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον ἀπευθύνει. —HIEROCL. in Pythag.

[o] Μετανοήσατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts iii. 19.

Ὡς γὰρ ἔχοντες δίκην τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς πεποιημένοις, παύονται τῆς ὀργῆς.—ARIST. 2. Rhetor.

——Ἀγαθοὶ ἀριδάκρυες ἄνδρες.—HOM.

Ὁ μετανοῶν οὐ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται.—HIEROCL.

[p] Nam illi qui ex aliis propositis in alia transiliunt, aut ne transiliunt quidem, sed casu quodam transmittuntur, quomodo habere quicquam certum mansurumve possunt, suspensi et vagi?—SENECA, Ep. 23.

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pose is not yet done, and yet it is necessary it should be done, because it is necessary we should purpose it. And in this we are sufficiently concluded by that ingeminate expression used by St. Paul: "In Jesus Christ nothing can avail but a new creature;" nothing "but faith working by charity," nothing "but a keeping the commandments of God."[q] "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; they are the Israel of God."[r]

38. This consideration I intended to oppose against the carnal security of death-bed penitents, who have (it is to be feared) spent a vicious life, who have therefore mocked themselves, because they meant to mock God, they would reap what they sowed not. "But be not deceived," saith the apostle; "he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."[s] Only this, "let us not be weary of well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not:"[t] meaning that by a persevering industry, and a long work, and a succession of religious times, we must sow to the Spirit; a work of such length, that the greatest danger is of fainting and intercision: but he that sows to the Spirit, not being weary of well-doing, not fainting in the long process, he, and he only, shall reap life everlasting. But a purpose is none of all this. If it comes to act, and be productive of a holy life, then it is useful, and it was like the eve of a holyday, festival in the midst of its abstinence and vigils, it was the beginnings of a repentance. But if it never come to act, it was to no purpose, a mocking of God, an act of direct hypocrisy, a provocation of God, and a deceiving our own selves; you are unhappy you began not early, or that your earlier days return not together with your good purposes.[u]

39. And neither can this have any other sentence, though the purpose be made upon our death-bed. For God hath made no covenant with us on our death-bed distinct from that he made with us in our life and health. And since in our life and present abilities, good purposes, and resolutions, and vows, (for they are but the same thing in differing degrees,) did signify nothing till they came to act, and no man was reconciled to God by good intentions, but by doing the will of God; can we imagine that such purposes can more prevail at the end of a wicked life than at the beginning? that less piety will serve our turns after fifty or sixty years' impiety, than after but five or ten? that a wicked and sinful life should by less pains be expiated than an unhappy year? For it is not in the state of grace as in other exterior actions of religion or charity, where God will accept the will for the deed, when the external act is inculpably out of our powers, and may also be supplied by the internal: as bendings of the body, by the prostration of the soul; alms, by charity; preaching, by praying for conversion. These things are necessary, because they are precepts, and obligatory only in certain circumstances, which may fail, and we be innocent and disobliged. But it is otherwise in the essential parts of our duty, which God hath made the immediate and next condition of our salvation, such which are never out of our power but by our own fault.[x] Such are charity, forgiveness, repentance, and faith; such to which we are assisted by God, such which are always put by God's grace into our power, therefore because God indispensably demands them. In these cases, as there is no revelation, God will accept the will for the deed, the purpose for the act, so it is unreasonable to expect it; because God did once put it into our powers, and, if we put it out, we must not complain of want of fire which ourselves have quenched, nor complain we cannot see, when we have put our own lights out; and hope God will accept the will for the deed, since we had no will to it when God put it into our powers. These are but fig-leaves to cover our nakedness, which our sin hath introduced.

40. For either the reducing such vows and purposes to act is the duty, without which the purpose is ineffectual; or else that practice is but the sign and testimony of a sincere intention, and that very sincere intention was of itself accepted by God in the first spring. If it was nothing but a sign, then the covenant which God made with man in Jesus Christ was faith and good meaning, not faith and repentance, and a man is justified as soon as ever he purposes well, before any endeavours are commenced, or any act produced, or habit ratified; and the duties of a holy life are but shadows and significations of a grace, no part of the covenant, not so much as smoke is of fire, but a mere sign of a person justified as soon as he made his vow: but then also a man may be justified five hundred times in a year, as often as he makes a new vow and confident resolution, which is then done most heartily, when the lust is newly satisfied, and the pleasure disappears for the instant, though the purpose disbands upon the next temptation. Yea, but, unless it be a sincere purpose, it will do no good; and although we cannot discern it, nor the man himself, yet God knows the heart; and if he sees it would have been reduced to act, then he accepts it, and this is the hopes of a dying man. But faint they are and dying, as the man himself.

41. For it is impossible for us to know but that what a man intends (as himself thinks) heartily, is sincerely meant, and if that may be insincere, and is to be judged only by a never-following event, (in case the man dies,) it cannot become to any man the ground of hope; nay, even to those persons who do

[q] Gal. vi. 15, v. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 19.
[r] Gal. vi. 16.
[s] Gal. vi. 7, 8.
[t] Ver. 9.
[u] Mutatus ——————
Dices, heu! (quoties te in speculo videris alterum)
Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?
HOR. lib. iv. od. 10.

[x] Εἰς ποῖον ἴτι χρόνον ἀναβάλῃ τὸ τῶν βελτίστων ἀξιοῦν σεαυτὸν, καὶ ἐν μηδενὶ παραβαίνειν τὸν διαιροῦντα λόγον; παρειληφας τὰ θεωρήματα οἷς ἔδει σε συμβάλλειν, καὶ συμβέβληκας; ποῖον οὖν ἴτι διδάσκαλον προσδοκᾷς, ἣν εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὑπερθῇς τὴν ἐπανόρθωσιν ποιῆσαι τὴν σεαυτοῦ; οὐκ ἔτι εἰ μειράκιον, ἀλλ' ἀνὴρ ἤδη τέλειος. Ἂν τοίνυν ἀμελήσῃς, καὶ ῥαθυμήσῃς, καὶ ἀεὶ ὑπερθέσεις ἐξ ὑπερθέσεων ποιῇς, προθέσεις ἐκ προθέσεων, καὶ ἡμέρας ἄλλας ἐπ' ἄλλαις ὁρίζῃς, μεθ' ἃς προσέξεις σεαυτῷ, λήσεις σεαυτὸν οὐ προκόψας, ἀλλ' ἰδιώτης διατελέσεις καὶ ζῶν καὶ ἀποθνήσκων.—EPICT. c. 75.

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mean sincerely, it is still an instrument of distrust and fears infinite, since his own sincere meaning hath nothing in the nature of the thing, no distinct formality, no principle, no sign, to distinguish it from the insincere vows of sorrowful, but not truly penitent, persons. 2. A purpose acted and not acted, differs not in the principle, but in the effect, which is extrinsical and accidental to the purpose, and each might be without the other: a man might live holily, though he had not made that vow; and when he hath made the vow, he may fail of living holily.[y] And as we should think it hard measure to have a damnation increased upon us for those sins which we would have committed if we had lived; so it cannot be reasonable to build our hopes of heaven upon an imaginary piety, which we never did, and, if we had lived, God knows whether we would or not. 3. God takes away the godly, lest malice should corrupt their understandings, and "for the elect's sake those days are shortened, which, if they should continue, no flesh should escape:" but now shall all that be laid upon their score,[z] which, if God had not so prevented by their death, God knows they would have done? And God deals with the wicked in a proportionable manner, to the contrary purpose, he shortens their days, and takes away their possibilities and opportunities, when the time of repentance is past, because he will not do violence to their wills: and this "lest they should return, and be converted, and I should heal them:"[a] so that it is evident, some persons are by some acts of God, after a vicious life, and the frequent rejection of the Divine grace, at last prevented from mercy, who, without such courses, and in contrary circumstances, might possibly do acts of repentance, and return, and then "God would heal them." 4. Let their purposes and vows be never so sincere in the principle, yet, since a man who is in the state of grace may again fail of it, and forget he was "purged from his old sins;" (and every dying sinner did so, if ever he was washed in the laver of regeneration, and sanctified in his spirit;) then much more may such a sincere purpose fail, and then it would be known to what distance of time or state from his purpose God will give his final sentence. Whether will he quit him, because in the first stage he will correspond with his intention, and act his purposes; or condemn him, because in his second stage he would prevaricate? And when a man does fail, it is not because his first principle was not good; for the Holy Spirit, which is certainly the best principle of spiritual actions, may be extinguished in a man, and a sincere or hearty purpose may be lost, or it may again be recovered, and be lost again: so that it is as unreasonable as it is unrevealed, that a sincere purpose on a death-bed shall obtain pardon, or pass for a new state of life. Few men are at those instants, and in such pressures, hypocritical and vain; and yet to perform such purposes is a new work and a new labour; it comes in upon a new stock, differing from that principle, and will meet with temptations, difficulties, and impediments; and an honest heart is not sure to remain so, but may split upon a rock of a violent invitation. A promise is made to be faithful or unfaithful *ex post facto*, by the event, but it was sincere or insincere in the principle, only if the person promising did, or did not, respectively at that time mean what he said. A sincere promise many times is not truly performed.

42. Concerning all the other acts which it is to be supposed a dying person can do, I have only this consideration: If they can make up a new creature, become a new state, be in any sense a holy life, a keeping the commandments of God, a following of peace and holiness, a becoming holy in all conversation; if they can arrive to the lowest sense of that excellent condition Christ intended to all his disciples, when he made "keeping the commandments" to be the condition of "entering into life," and not "crying, Lord, Lord, but doing the will of God;" if he that hath served the lusts of the flesh, and taken pay under all God's enemies during a long and malicious life, can, for any thing a dying person can do, be said in any sense to have lived holily; then his hopes are fairly built: if not, they rely upon a sand, and the storm of death, and the Divine displeasure, will beat too violently upon them. There are no suppletories of the evangelical covenant: if we "walk according to the rule," then "shall peace and righteousness kiss each other;" if we have sinned, and prevaricated the rule, repentance must bring us into the ways of righteousness, and then we must go on upon the old stock; but the "deeds of the flesh" must be "mortified," and Christ must "dwell in us," and the Spirit must "reign in us," and virtue must be habitual, and the habits must be confirmed: and this as we do by the Spirit of Christ, so it is hallowed and accepted by the grace of God, and we put into a condition of favour, and redeemed from sin, and reconciled to God. But this will not be put off with single acts, nor divided parts, nor newly commenced purposes,[b] nor fruitless sorrow; it is a great folly to venture eternity upon dreams: so that now let me represent the condition of a dying person after a vicious life.

43. First: He that considers the frailty of human bodies, their incidences and aptness to sickness, casualties, death, sudden or expected, the condition of several diseases, that some are of too quick a sense, and are intolerable, some are dull, stupid, and lethargical; then adds the prodigious judgments which fall upon many sinners in the act of sin, and are marks of our dangers, and God's essential justice and severity; and that security which possesses such persons whose lives are vicious, and that habitual carelessness, and groundless confidence, or an abso-

[y] Et quis tandem est nostrûm qui, quod ad sese attinet, æquum censeat quenquam pœnas dare ob eam rem, quòd arguatur malè facere voluisse? Nemo, opinor.——Sed si honorem non æquum est habere ob eam rem, quòd bene facere voluisse quis dicit, neque fecit tamen; Rhodiensibus tale erit, non quòd malè fecerunt, sed quia voluisse dicuntur facere.—Orat. M. Catonis pro Rhodiens. apud A. Gellium, lib. vii. cap. 3.

[z] Nunquam crescit ex post facto præteriti æstimatio.—D. de Reg. Jur.

[a] Matt. xiii. 15, ex Isa. vi. 9, 10. Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. 10. John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 27. Rom. xi. 8.

[b] Audies plerosque dicentes, A quinquagesimo in otium secedam; Sexagesimus annus ab officiis me dimittet. Et quem tandem longioris vitæ prædem accipis?—Senec.

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lute inconsideration, which is generally the condition and constitution of such minds, every one whereof is likely enough to confound a persevering sinner in miseries eternal; will soon apprehend the danger of a delayed repentance to be infinite and unmeasurable.[c]

44. Secondly: But suppose such a person, having escaped the antecedent circumstances of the danger, is set fairly upon his death-bed, with the just apprehension of his sins about him, and his addresses to repentance; consider then the strength of his lusts, that the sins he is to mortify are inveterate, habitual, and confirmed, having had the growth and stability of a whole life; that the liberty of his will is impaired; (the Scripture saying of such persons, "whose eyes are full of lust, and that cannot cease from sin;"[d] and that "his servants they are whom they obey;" that they are slaves to sin, and so not *sui juris*, not at their own dispose;) that his understanding is blinded, his appetite is mutinous, and of a long time used to rebel and prevail; that all the inferior faculties are in disorder; that he wants the helps of grace proportionable to his necessities (for the longer he hath continued in sin, the weaker the grace of God is in him; so that, in effect, at that time the more need he hath, the less he shall receive, it being God's rule "to give to him that hath, and from him that hath not, to take even what he hath"): then add the innumerable parts and great burdens of repentance, that it is not a sorrow, nor a purpose, because both these suppose that to be undone which is the only necessary support of all our hopes in Christ when it is done; the innumerable difficult cases of conscience that may then occur, particularly in the point of restitution; (which, among many other necessary parts of repentance, is indispensably required of all persons that are able, and in every degree in which they are able;) the many temptations of the devil, the strength of passions, the impotency of the flesh, the illusions of the spirits of darkness, the tremblings[e] of the heart, the incogitancy of the mind, the implication and entanglings of ten thousand thoughts, and the impertinences of a disturbed fancy, and the great hinderances[f] of a sick body, and a sad and weary spirit: all these represent a death-bed to be but an ill station for a penitent.[g] If the person be suddenly snatched away, he is not left so much as to dispute; if he be permitted to languish in his sickness, he is either stupid, and apprehends nothing, or else miserable, and hath reason to apprehend too much. However, all these difficulties are to be past and overcome before the man be put into a savable condition. From this consideration, though perhaps it may infer more, yet we cannot but conclude this difficulty to be as great as the former danger, that is, vast and ponderous, and insupportable.

45. Thirdly: Suppose the clinic, or death-bed penitent, to be as forward in these employments, and as successful in the mastering many of the objections, as reasonably can be thought: yet it is considerable, that there is a repentance which is to be repented of, and that is a repentance which is not productive of fruits of amendment of life; that there is a period set down by God in his judgment, and that many, who have been profane as Esau was, are reduced into the condition of Esau, and "there is no place left for their repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears;" that they who have long refused to hear God calling them to repentance, God will refuse to hear them calling for grace and mercy; that "he will laugh" at some men "when their calamity comes;"[h] that the five foolish virgins addressed themselves at the noise of the bridegroom's coming, and begged oil, and went out to buy oil, and yet, for want of some more time and an early diligence, came too late, and were shut out for ever; that it is no where revealed that such late endeavours and imperfect practices shall be accepted; that God hath made but one covenant with us in Jesus Christ, which is faith and repentance consigned in baptism; and the signification of them, and the purpose of Christ, is, "that we should henceforth no more serve sin," but mortify and kill him perpetually, and destroy his kingdom, and extinguish, as much as in us lies, his very title; that we should "live holily, justly, and soberly, in this present world, in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that either we must be continued in or reduced to this state of holy living and habitual sanctity, or we have no title to the promises; that every degree of recession from the state Christ first put us in, is a recession from our hopes, and an insecuring our condition, and we add to our confidence only as our obedience is restored. All this is but a sad story to a dying person, who "sold himself to work wickedness," in an habitual iniquity and aversation from the conditions of the holy covenant in which he was sanctified.

46. And certainly it is unreasonable to plant all our hopes of heaven upon a doctrine that is destructive of all piety, which supposes us in such a condition that God hath been offended at us all our life long, and yet that we can never return our duties to

[c] Παρήνει δὲ τοῖς συνοῦσι μὴ ἀναβάλλεσθαι τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ὅπερ τοὺς πολλοὺς ποιεῖν, προθεσμίας ὁριζομένους ἑορτὰς ἢ πανηγύρεις, ὡς ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἀρξομένους τοῦ μὴ ψεύσασθαι, καὶ τοῦ τὰ δέοντα ποιήσειν.—LUCIAN. Nigrin.

[d] 2 Pet. ii. 14.

[e] Ἐπειδάν τις ἐγγὺς ᾖ τοῦ οἴεσθαι τελευτήσειν, εἰσέρχεται αὐτῷ φόβος καὶ φροντὶς, περὶ ὧν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν οὐκ εἰσῄει.—PLATO de Repub.

[f] Nequit sanè fieri ut homo intelligat aut cognoscat quicquam ex cognitione Creatoris, si adversâ valetudine contabescat.—MAIMON. Can. Eth. cap. 4.

[g] Ante senectutem, curandum est ût homo bene vivat; in senectute autem, ut bene moriatur.—SENECA.

[h] O si compunctas humana superbia mentes
Ante obitum mutare, nec exspectare suprema
Fata velit ——————
Pœnitet ambiguè quem serò pœnitet; ergò
Præsentis spatium nobis dum creditur ævi,
Dum patulam cunctis Christi clementia sese
Præbet, præteritæ plangamus crimina vitæ,
Dum licet, et sano ingenioque animoque valemus.
ALCIMUS Avit.

Bis jam penè tibi consul trigesimus instat,
Et numerat paucos vix tua vita dies.
MART. lib. i. Ep. 16.

Vide S. Ambros. lib. ii. de Pœnit. cap. i. et xi. S. Aug. in lib. Homil. homil. xli. S. Basil. Orat. iv. S. Bernard. in parvis Serm. ser. xxxviii.

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him, unless he will unravel the purposes of his predestination, or call back time again, and begin a new computation of years for us; and if he did, it would be still as uncertain. For what hope is there to that man who hath fulfilled all iniquity, and hath not fulfilled righteousness? Can a man live to the devil, and die to God? "sow to the flesh," and "reap to the Spirit?" hope God will in mercy reward him who hath served his enemy? Sure it is, the doctrine of the avail of a death-bed repentance cannot easily be reconciled with God's purposes and intentions to have us live a good life; for it would reconcile us to the hopes of heaven for a few thoughts, or words, or single actions, when our life is done; it takes away the benefit of many graces, and the use of more, and the necessity of all.

47. For let it be seriously weighed, To what purpose is the variety of God's grace? what use is there of preventing, restraining, concomitant, subsequent, and persevering grace, unless it be in order to a religious conversation? And by deferring repentance to the last, we despoil our souls, and rob the Holy Ghost of the glory of many rays and holy influences, with which the church is watered and refreshed; that it may "grow from grace to grace," till it be consummate in glory. It takes away the very being of chastity and temperance; no such virtues, according to this doctrine, need to be named among christians. For the dying person is not in capacity to exercise these; and then, either they are troublesome, without which we may do well enough, or else the condition of the unchaste and intemperate clinic is sad and deplorable. For how can he eject those devils of lust, and drunkenness, and gluttony, from whom the disease hath taken all powers of election and variety of choice, unless it be possible to root out long-contracted habits in a moment, or acquire the habits of chastity, sobriety, and temperance, those self-denying and laborious graces, without doing a single act of the respective virtues, in order to obtaining of habits; unless it be so that God will infuse habits into us more immediately than he creates our reasonable souls, in an instant, and without the co-operation of the suscipient, without "the working out our salvation with fear," and without "giving all diligence," and "running with patience," and "resisting unto blood," and "striving to the last," and "enduring unto the end," in a long fight and a long race? If God infuses such habits, why have we laws given us, and are commanded to work, and to do our duty with such a succession and lasting diligence, as if the habits were to be acquired; to which, indeed, God promises and ministers his aids, still leaving us the persons obliged to the law and the labour, as we are capable of the reward? I need not instance any more. But this doctrine of a death-bed repentance is inconsistent with the duties of mortification; with all the vindictive and punitive parts of repentance, in exterior instances; with the precepts of waiting, and watchfulness, and preparation, and standing in a readiness "against the coming of the bridegroom;" with "the patience of well-doing;" with exemplary living; with the imitation of the life of Christ, and conformities to his passion; with the kingdom, and dominion, and growth of grace. And, lastly, it goes about to defeat one of God's great purposes; for God therefore concealed the time of our death,[i] that we might always stand upon our guard. The holy Jesus told us so: "Watch, for ye know not what hour the Lord will come:" but this makes men seem more crafty in their late-begun piety, than God was provident and mysterious in concealing the time of our dissolution.

48. And now, if it be demanded, How long time must our repentance and holy living take up? What is the last period of commencement of our piety, after which it will be unaccepted or ineffectual? Will a month, or a year, or three years, or seven, suffice? For since every man fails of his first condition, and makes violent recessions from the state of his redemption and his baptismal grace, how long may he lie in that state of recession, with hopes of salvation?[k] To this I answer, He cannot lie in sin a moment, without hazarding his eternity; every instant is a danger, and all the parts of its duration do increase it; and there is no answer to be given antecedently, and by way of rule, but all the hopes of our restitution depend upon the event. It is just as if we should ask, How long will it be before an infant comes to the perfect use of reason, or before a fool will become wise, or an ignorant person become excellently learned? The answer to such questions must be given according to the capacity of the man, to the industry of his person, to his opportunities or hinderances, to his life and health, and to God's blessing upon him. Only this; every day of deferring it lessens our hopes, and increases the difficulty; and when this increasing, divisible difficulty comes to the last period of impossibility, God only knows, because he measures the thoughts of man, and comprehends his powers in a span; and himself only can tell how he will correspond, in those assistances, without which we can never be restored.[l] "Agree with thy adversary quickly,

[i] Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus.—Horat. lib. iii. od. 29.
Vita data est utenda, data est sine fœnore nobis
Mutua, nec certâ persoluëndа die.

Quæris quod sit longissimum vitæ spatium? Usque ad sapientiam pervenire. Qui ad illam pervenit, attingit non longissimum finem, sed maximum.—Senec.

[k] Malè vivunt qui semper vivere incipiunt. Non potest stare paratus ad mortem, qui modò incipit vivere. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est; quidam antè vivere desiêrunt quàm inciperent.—Senec. Ep. 23.

[l] Hic est locus solvendi æris alieni.—Senec. ibid.
Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat.—Idem, Ep. 30.

——Qui peccatum moriens dimittit, et ipsa
In serum tempus differt admissa fateri,
Non tam dimittit, quàm dimittatur ab illis.
Alcim. Avitus.

Non potest stare paratus ad mortem qui modò incipit vivere. Id agendum est, ut satis vixerimus. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est. Si hoc judicas mirum, adjiciam quod magis admireris: Quidam antè vivere desiêrunt quàm inciperent.—Senec. Ep. 23.

Cras te victurum, cras dicis, Posthume, semper.
Dic mihi, Cras istud, Posthume, quando venit?
Cras vives? hodie jam vivere, Posthume, serum est:
Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri.
Martial. lib. v. Ep. 59.

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while thou art in the way:" quickly. And, therefore, the Scripture sets down no other time than "to-day; while it is yet called to-day." But, because it will every day be called to-day, we must remember, that our duty is such as requires a time, a duration; it is a course, "a race that is set before us;" a duty requiring patience, and longanimity, and perseverance, and great care and diligence, "that we faint not." And, supposing we could gather probably, by circumstances, when the last period of our hopes begins; yet he that stands out as long as he can, gives probation, that he came not in of good will or choice; that he loves not the present service; that his body is present, but his heart is estranged from the yoke of his present employment; and then all that he can do is odious to God, being a sacrifice without a heart, an offertory of shells and husks, while the devil and the man's lusts have devoured the kernels.

49. So that this question is not to be asked beforehand; but after a man hath done much of the work, and in some sense lived holily, then he may inquire into his condition; whether, if he persevere in that, he may hope for the mercies of Jesus. But he that inquires beforehand, as commonly he means ill, so he can be answered by none but God; because the satisfaction of such a vain question depends upon future contingencies, and accidents depending upon God's secret pleasure and predestination. He that repents but to-day, repents late enough, that he put it off from yesterday. It may be that some may begin to-day, and find mercy, and to another person it may be too late; but no man is safe or wise that puts it off till to-morrow. And that it may appear how necessary it is to begin early, and that the work is of difficulty and continuance, and that time still increases the objections, it is certain that all the time that is lost must be redeemed by something in the sequel, equivalent or fit to make up the breach, and to cure the wounds long since made, and long festering; and this must be done by doing the first works, by something that God hath declared he will accept instead of them: the intention of the following actions, and the frequent repetition, must make up the defect in the extension and co-existence, with a longer time. It was an act of an heroical repentance, and great detestation of the crime, which Thomas Cantipratanus relates, of a young gentleman condemned to die for robberies; who, endeavouring to testify his repentance, and, as far as was then permitted him, to expiate the crime, begged of the judge, that tormentors might be appointed him, that he might be long a dying, and be cut in small pieces, that the severity of the execution might be proportionable to the immensity of his sorrow and greatness of the iniquity. Such great acts do facilitate our pardon, and hasten the restitution, and in a few days comprise the elapsed duty of many months: but to rely upon such acts is the last remedy, and like unlikely physic to a despairing person: if it do well, it is well; if it happen otherwise, he must thank himself, it is but what in reason he could expect. The Romans sacrificed a dog to Mana Geneta, and prayed, "Ne quis domi natorum bonus fiat," that none of their domestics might be good; that is, that they might not die, (saith Plutarch,[m]) because dead people are called good. But if they be so only when they die, they will hardly find the reward of goodness in the reckonings of eternity, when to kill and to make good is all one (as Aristotle observed it to be in the Spartan covenant with the Tegeatæ,[n] and as it is the case of penitents, never mending their lives till their lives be done:) that goodness is fatal, and the prologue of an eternal death.

50. I conclude this point with the words of St. Paul: "God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality;" to them, "eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness;" to them "indignation and wrath: tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil?"[o]

51. Having now discoursed of repentance upon distinct principles, I shall not need to consider upon those particulars, which are usually reckoned parts or instances of repentance; such as are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Repentance is the fulfilling all righteousness, and includes in it whatsoever is matter of christian duty, and expressly commanded; such as is contrition or godly sorrow, and confession to God, both which are declared in Scripture to be in order to pardon and purgation of our sins. "A contrite and a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise;" and, "If we confess our sins, God is just and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." To which add, concerning satisfaction, that it is a judging and punishing of ourselves; that it also is an instrument of repentance, and a fruit of godly sorrow, and of good advantage for obtaining mercy of God. For "indignation and revenge" are reckoned by St. Paul effects of "a godly sorrow;" and the blessing which encourages its practice, is instanced by the same saint: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord; but if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged:" where he expounds "judged" by "chastened;" if we were severer to ourselves, God would be gentle and remiss.[p] And there are only these two cautions to be annexed, and then the direction is sufficient. 1. That when promise of pardon is annexed to any of these or another grace, or any good action, it is not to be understood as if alone it were effectual, either to the abolition or pardon of sins; but the promise is made to it, as to a member of the whole body of piety. In the coadunation and conjunction

Non bene distuleris, videas quæ posse negari;
Et solum hoc ducas, quod fuit, esse tuum.
Non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere, Vivam.
Sera nimis vita est crastina; vive hodie.
MARTIAL. lib. i. Ep. 16.

[m] Τελευτῶντες χρηστοί. Ῥωμαϊκ. κεφ. νβ.

[n] Μηδένα χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτιννύναι.
PLUTAR. ibid. ex Aristotele.

[o] Rom. ii. 6—9.

[p] Τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀρνουμένους καὶ ἀντιλέγοντας μᾶλλον κολάζομεν· πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ὁμολογοῦντας δικαίως κολάζεσθαι ζυνούμενοι.—ARIST. Rhet. 2.

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of parts, the title is firm, but not at all in distinction and separation. For it is certain, if we fail in one, we are guilty of all; and therefore cannot be repaired by any one grace, or one action, or one habit. And therefore, "charity hides a multitude of sins"[q] with men and God too; "alms deliver them from death;[r] humility pierceth the clouds," and will not depart before its answer be gracious; and "hope purifieth,[s] and makes not ashamed;"[t] and patience, and faith, and piety to parents, and prayer, and the eight beatitudes, "have promises of this life, and of that which is to come,"[u] respectively: and yet nothing will obtain these promises, but the harmony and uniting of these graces in a holy and habitual confederation. And when we consider the promise, as singularly relating to that one grace, it is to be understood comparatively; that is, such persons are happy, if compared with those who have contrary dispositions. For such a capacity does its portion of the work, towards complete felicity, from which the contrary quality does estrange and disentitle us.

2. The special and minute actions, and instances, of these three preparatives of repentance, are not under any command in the particulars, but are to be disposed of by christian prudence, in order to those ends to which they are most aptly instrumental and designed: such as are fasting, and corporal severities in satisfaction, or the punitive parts of repentance; they are either vindictive of what is past, and so are proper acts or effects of contrition and godly sorrow; or else they relate to the present and future state, and are intended for correction or emendation, and so are of good use as they are medicinal, and in that proportion not to be omitted. And so is confession, to a spiritual person, an excellent instrument of discipline, a bridle of intemperate passions, an opportunity of restitution: "Ye which are spiritual, restore such a person overtaken in a fault,"[x] saith the apostle; it is the application of a remedy, the consulting with the guide, and the best security to a weak, or lapsed, or an ignorant person, in all which cases he is unfit to judge his own questions, and in these he is also committed to the care and conduct of another. But these special instances of repentance are capable of suppletories, and are, like the corporal works of mercy, necessary only in time and place, and in accidental obligations. He that relieves the poor, or visits the sick, choosing it for the instance of his charity, though he do not redeem captives, is charitable, and hath done his alms. And he that cures his sin by any instruments, by external, or interior and spiritual remedies, is penitent, though his diet be not ascetic and afflictive, or his lodging hard, or his sorrow bursting out into tears, or his expressions passionate and dolorous.[y] I only add this, that acts of public repentance must be by using the instruments of the church, such as she hath appointed; of private, such as, by experience, or by reason, or by the counsel we can get, we shall learn to be most effective of our penitential purposes. And yet it is a great argument that the exterior expressions of corporal severities are of good benefit, because, in all ages, wise men and severe penitents have chosen them for their instruments.

[q] Jam. v. 20. [r] Tob. iv. 10. [s] 1 John iii. 3.
[t] Rom. v. 5. [u] 1 Tim. iv. 8. [x] Gal. vi. 1.

[y] Vide Disc. of Mortification, Part i. and Disc. of Fasting, Part ii.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who wert pleased in mercy to look upon us when we were in our blood, to reconcile us when we were enemies, to forgive us in the midst of our provocations of thy infinite and eternal majesty, finding out a remedy for us which mankind could never ask, even making an atonement for us by the death of thy Son, sanctifying us by the blood of the everlasting covenant and thy all-hallowing and divine Spirit; let thy graces so perpetually assist and encourage my endeavours, conduct my will, and fortify my intentions, that I may persevere in that holy condition which thou hast put me in by the grace of the covenant, and the mercies of the holy Jesus. O let me never fall into those sins, and retire to that vain conversation, from which the eternal and merciful Saviour of the world hath redeemed me; but let me grow in grace, adding virtue to virtue, reducing my purposes to act, and increasing my acts till they grow into habits, and my habits till they be confirmed, and still confirming them till they be consummate in a blessed and holy perseverance. Let thy preventing grace dash all temptations in their approach; let thy concomitant grace enable me to resist them in the assault, and overcome them in the fight: that my hopes be never discomposed, nor my faith weakened, nor my confidence made remiss, nor my title and portion in the covenant be lessened. Or if thou permittest me at any time to fall, (which, holy Jesu, avert, for thy mercy and compassion's sake,) yet let me not sleep in sin, but recall me instantly by the clamours of a nice and tender conscience, and the quickening sermons of the Spirit, that I may never pass from sin to sin, from one degree to another; lest sin should get the dominion over me, lest thou be angry with me, and reject me from the covenant, and I perish. Purify me from all uncleanness, sanctify my spirit that I may be holy as thou art, and let me never provoke thy jealousy, nor presume upon thy goodness, nor distrust thy mercies, nor defer my repentance, nor rely upon vain confidence; but let me, by a constant, sedulous, and timely endeavour, make my calling and election sure, living to thee and dying to thee; that, having sowed to the Spirit, I may from thy mercies reap in the Spirit bliss, and eternal sanctity, and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our hope, and our mighty and ever glorious Redeemer. Amen.

Upon Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and of the Eight Beatitudes.

1. THE holy Jesus, being entered upon his prophetical office, in the first solemn sermon gave

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testimony that he was not only an interpreter of laws then in being, but also a Lawgiver, and an Angel of the new and everlasting covenant; which because God meant to establish with mankind by the mediation of his Son, by his Son also he now began to publish the conditions of it: and that the publication of the christian law might retain some proportion, at least, and analogy of circumstance, with the promulgation of the law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. And here he taught all the disciples; for what he was now to speak was to become a law, a part of the condition on which he established the covenant, and founded our hopes of heaven. Our excellent and gracious Lawgiver, knowing that the great argument in all practical disciplines is the proposal of the end, which is their crown and their reward, begins his sermon, as David began his most divine collection of hymns, with "blessedness." And having enumerated eight duties, which are the rule of the spirits of christians, he begins every duty with a beatitude, and concludes it with a reward; to manifest the reasonableness, and to invite and determine our choice to such graces which are circumscribed with felicities, which have blessedness in present possession, and glory in the consequence, which, in the midst of the most passive and afflictive of them, tells us that we are blessed, which is indeed a felicity, as a hope is good, or as a rich heir is rich, who, in the midst of his discipline, and the severity of tutors and governors, knows he is designed to, and certain of, a great inheritance.

2. The eight beatitudes, which are the duty of a christian and the rule of our spirit, and the special discipline of Christ, seem like so many paradoxes and impossibilities reduced to reason; and are indeed virtues made excellent by rewards, by the sublimity of grace, and the mercies of God, hallowing and crowning those habits which are despised by the world, and are esteemed the conditions of lower and less considerable people. But God "sees not as man sees," and his rules of estimate and judgment are not borrowed from the exterior splendour, which is apt to seduce children, and cozen fools, and please the appetites of sense and abused fancy; but they are such as he makes himself, excellencies which, by abstractions and separations from things below, land us upon celestial appetites. And they are states of suffering rather than states of life: for the great employment of a christian being to bear the cross, Christ laid the pedestal so low, that the rewards were like rich mines interred in the deeps and inaccessible retirements, and did choose to build our felicities upon the torrents and violences of affliction and sorrow. Without these graces we cannot get heaven, and without sorrow and sad accidents we cannot exercise these graces. Such are,

3. First: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Poverty of spirit is in respect of secular affluence and abundance, or in respect of great opinion and high thoughts;[a] either of which have divers acts and offices. That the first is one of the meanings of this text is certain, because St. Luke, repeating this beatitude, delivers it plainly, "Blessed are the poor;"[b] and to it he opposes riches. And our blessed Saviour[c] speaks so suspiciously of riches and rich men, that he represents the condition to be full of danger and temptation: and St. James[d] calls it full of sin; describing rich men to be oppressors, litigious, proud, spiteful, and contentious; which sayings, like all others of that nature, are to be understood in common and most frequent accidents, not regularly, but very improbable to be otherwise. For if we consider our vocation, St. Paul informs us, that "not many mighty, not many noble, are called;" but "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith:" and how "hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven," our great Master hath taught us, by saying, "It is more easy for a camel to pass through a needle's eye." And the reason is, because of the infinite temptation which riches minister to our spirits; it being such an opportunity of vices, that nothing remains to countermand the act, but a strong, resolute, unaltered, and habitual purpose, and pure love of virtue; riches, in the mean time, offering to us occasions of lust, fuel for revenge, instruments of pride, entertainment of our desires, engaging them in low, worldly, and sottish appetites, inviting us to show our power in oppression, our greatness in vanities, our wealth in prodigal expenses, and to answer the importunity of our lusts, not by a denial, but by a correspondence and satisfaction, till they become our mistresses, imperious, arrogant, tyrannical, and vain.[e] But poverty is the sister of a good mind; it ministers aid to wisdom, industry to our spirit, severity to our thoughts, soberness to our counsels, modesty to our desires; it restrains extravagancy and dissolution of appetites; the next thing above our present condition, which is commonly the object of our wishes, being temperate, and little proportionable enough to nature, not wandering beyond the limits of necessity or a moderate conveniency, or at farthest, but to a free refreshment, and recreation. And the cares of poverty are single and mean, rather a fit employment to correct our levities, than a business to impede our better thoughts; since a little thing supplies the needs of nature, and the earth and the

[a] Προκοπὴ ψυχῆς προκοπὴ ταπεινώσεως.
[b] Luke vi. 20.
[c] Luke vi. 24.
[d] James ii. 6, &c. v. 1, &c.
[e] Nulli fortunæ minùs bene quàm optimæ creditur. Aliâ felicitate ad tuendam felicitatem est opus.—SENEC.
Ὤφελες, ὦ τυφλὲ πλοῦτε, μήτ' ἐν γῇ, μήτ' ἐν θαλάττῃ, μήτ' ἐν ἠπείρῳ φανῆναι, ἀλλὰ τάρταρόν τε νάειν καὶ ἀχέροντα· διὰ σὲ γὰρ πάντα ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακά.—TIMOCR. Lyr.
Vel nos in mare proximum
Gemmas et lapides, aurum et inutile,
Summi materiam mali,
Mittamus.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 24.
Ὁ δὲ πλοῦτος ἡμᾶς, καθάπερ ἰατρὸς κακὸς,
Τυφλοὺς, βλέποντας παραλαβὼν, πάντας ποιεῖ.
Incert. apud STOB. Floril. tit. 93.
Δοῦλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμην, καὶ σώματι πηρὸς,
Καὶ πενίην Ἴρος, καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτοις.
Γλακτοφάγων, ἀβίων τε, δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων,
dixit Homerus de Mysis et Hippomolgis, lib. xiii. Il. Justissimos et longævos dixit qui vescebantur lacte et cibo modesto.

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fountain[f] with little trouble minister food to us, and God's common providence and daily dispensation eases the cares, and makes them portable. But the cares and business of rich men are violences to our whole man; they are loads of memory, business for the understanding, work for two or three arts and sciences, employment for many servants to assist in, increase the appetite, and heighten the thirst; and, by making their dropsy bigger, and their capacities large, they destroy all these opportunities and possibilities of charity, in which only riches can be useful.

4. But it is not a mere poverty of possession which entitles us to the blessing, but a poverty of spirit; that is, a contentedness in every state, an aptness to renounce all when we are obliged in duty, a refusing to continue a possession, when we for it must quit a virtue or a noble action, a divorce of our affections from those gilded vanities, a generous contempt of the world; and at no hand heaping riches, either with injustice or with avarice, either with wrong or impotency, of action or affection. Not like Laberius, described by the poet,[g] who thought nothing so criminal as poverty, and every spending of a sesterce was the loss of a moral virtue, and every gaining of a talent was an action glorious and heroical. But poverty of spirit accounts riches to be the servants of God first, and then of ourselves, being sent by God, and to return when he pleases, and all the while they are with us to do his business. It is a looking upon riches and things of the earth, as they do who look upon it from heaven, to whom it appears little and unprofitable. And because the residence of this blessed poverty is in the mind, it follows that it be here understood, that all that exinanition and renunciation, abjection and humility of mind, which depauperates the spirit, making it less worldly and more spiritual, is the duty here enjoined. For if a man throws away his gold, as did Crates the Theban, or the proud philosopher Diogenes, and yet leaves a spirit high, airy, fantastical, and vain, pleasing himself, and with complacency reflecting upon his own act, his poverty is but a circumstance of pride, and the opportunity of an imaginary and a secular greatness. Ananias and Sapphira renounced the world by selling their possessions; but because they were not "poor in spirit," but still retained the affections to the world, therefore they "kept back part of the price," and lost their hopes. The church of Laodicea[h] was possessed with a spirit of pride, and flattered themselves in imaginary riches; they were not poor in spirit, but they were poor in possession and condition. These wanted humility, the other wanted a generous contempt of worldly things; and both were destitute of this grace.

5. The acts of this grace are: 1. To cast off all inordinate affection to riches.[i] 2. In heart and spirit, that is, preparation of mind to quit the possession of all riches, and actually so to do, when God requires it, that is, when the retaining riches loses a virtue. 3. To be well pleased with the whole economy of God, his providence and dispensation of all things, being contented in all estates. 4. To employ that wealth God hath given us[k] in actions of justice and religion. 5. To be thankful to God in all temporal losses. 6. Not to distrust God, or to be solicitous and fearful of want in the future. 7. To put off the spirit of vanity, pride, and fantastic complacency in ourselves, thinking lowly or meanly of whatsoever we are or do. 8. To prefer others before ourselves, doing honour and prelation to them, and either contentedly receiving affronts done to us, or modestly undervaluing ourselves. 9. Not to praise ourselves but when God's glory and the edification of our neighbour is concerned in it, nor willingly to hear others praise us. 10. To despoil ourselves of all interior propriety, denying our own will in all instances of subordination to our superiors, and our own judgment in matters of difficulty and question, permitting ourselves and our affairs to the advice of wiser men, and the decision of those who are trusted with the cure of our souls. 11. Emptying ourselves of ourselves, and throwing ourselves wholly upon God, relying upon his providence, trusting his promises, craving his grace, and depending upon his strength for all our actions, and deliverances, and duties.

6. The reward promised is "the kingdom of heaven. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom."[l] To be little in our own eyes is to be great in God's; the poverty of the spirit shall be rewarded with the riches of the kingdoms, of both kingdoms:[m] that of heaven is expressed. Poverty is the highway of eternity. But, therefore, the kingdom of grace is taken in the way, the way to our country; and it, being the forerunner of glory, and nothing else but an antedated eternity, is part of the reward as well as of our duty. And, therefore, whatsoever is signified by kingdom, in the appropriate evangelical sense, is there intended as a recompence. For the kingdom of the gospel is a congregation and society of Christ's poor, of his "little ones:" they are the communion of saints, and their present entertainment is knowledge of the truth, remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and what else in Scripture is signified to be a part, or grace, or condition

[f] ——Satis est fluviusque Ceresque.—LUCAN.

Ἐπεὶ τί δεῖ βροτοῖσι πλὴν δυοῖν μόνον,
Δημητρὸς ἀκτῆς, πώματος θ' ὑδρηχόου,
Ἄπερ πάρεστι, καὶ πέφυχ' ἡμᾶς τρέφειν.—EURIP.

[g] ——Quoad vixit, credidit ingens
Pauperiem vitium, et cavit nil acrius, ut si
Fortè minùs locuples uno quadrante periret,
Ipse videretur nequior sibi——————HORAT.

[h] Apocal. iii. 17.

[i] Ἐγὼ οὔτ' Ἀμαλθείης βουλοίμην κέρας, οὔτ' ἔτεα πεντήκοντα ἑκατὸν Ταρτήσου βασιλεῦσαι.—ANACREON.

[k] Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Rectè beatum: rectiùs occupat
Nomen beati, qui deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti,
Duramque callet pauperiem pati,
Pejusque letho flagitium timet, &c.
HOR. lib. iv. Od. 9.

[l] Latiùs regnes avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Libyam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni.—HOR. lib. ii. Od. 2.
Serviet æternùm, qui parvo nesciet uti.—HOR.

[m] Matt. xi. 11. and xviii. 4.

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of the kingdom. For "to the poor the gospel is preached;"[n] that is, to the poor the kingdom is promised and ministered.

7. Secondly: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." This duty of christian mourning is commanded not for itself, but in order to many good ends. It is in order to patience: "Tribulation worketh patience;"[o] and therefore "we glory in them," saith St. Paul; and St. James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith (viz. by afflictions) worketh patience."[p] 2. It is in order to repentance: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance."[q] 3. By consequence it is in order to pardon; for "a contrite heart God will not reject." 4. And after all this it leads to joy; and therefore St. James preached a homily of sorrow: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep," that is, in penitential mourning; for he adds, "humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."[r] The acts of this duty are: 1. To bewail our own sins. 2. To lament our infirmities, as they are principles of sin, and recessions from our first state. 3. To weep for our own evils and sad accidents, as they are issues of the Divine anger. 4. To be sad for the miseries and calamities of the church, or of any member of it: and, indeed, to "weep with every one that weeps;" that is, not to rejoice in his evil, but to be compassionate, and pitiful, and apt to bear another's burden. 5. To avoid all loose and immoderate laughter, all dissolution of spirit and manners, uncomely jestings, free revellings, carnivals, and balls, which are the perdition of precious hours, (allowed us for repentance and possibilities of heaven,) which are the instruments of infinite vanity, idle talking, impertinency, and lust, and very much below the severity and retiredness of a christian spirit. Of this Christ became to us the great example; for St. Basil reports a tradition of him, that he never laughed, but wept often. And if we mourn with him, we shall also rejoice in the joys of eternity.

8. Thirdly: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the earth:" that is, the gentle and softer spirits, persons not turbulent or unquiet, not clamorous or impatient, not over-bold or impudent, not querulous or discontented, not brawlers or contentious, not nice or curious, but men who submit to God, and know no choice of fortune or employment or success, but what God chooses for them, having peace at home, because nothing from without does discompose their spirit. In some, meekness is an indifference to any exterior accident, a being reconciled to all conditions and instances of Providence, a reducing ourselves to such an evenness and interior satisfaction, that there is the same conformity of spirit and fortune by complying with my fortune, as if my fortune did comply with my spirit.[s] And, therefore, in the order of beatitudes, meekness is set between mourning and desire, that it might balance and attemper those actions by indifference, which, by reason of their abode, are apt to the transportation of passion.[t] The reward expressed is "a possession of the earth," that is, a possession of all which is excellent here below, to consign him to a future glory, as Canaan was a type of heaven. For meekness is the best cement and combining of friendships, it is a great endearment of us to our company. It is an ornament to have "a meek and quiet spirit,"[u] a prevention of quarrels, and pacifier of wrath;[x] it purchaseth peace, and is itself a quietness of spirit: it is the greatest affront to all injuries in the world; for it returns them upon the injurious, and makes them useless, ineffective, and innocent; and is an antidote against all the evil consequents of anger and adversity, and tramples upon the usurping passions of the irascible faculty.

9. But the greatest part of this paysage and landscape is sky: and as a man, in all countries, can see more of heaven than of the earth he dwells on; so also he may in this promise. For although the christian hears the promise of "the inheritance of the earth," yet he must place his eye, and fix his heart, upon heaven, which, by looking downward also upon this promise, as in a vessel of limpid water, he may see by reflection, without looking upwards by a direct intuition. It is heaven that is designed by this promise, as well as by any of the rest; though this grace takes in also the refreshments of the earth by equivalence, and a suppletory design. But "here we have no abiding city," and therefore, no inheritance; this is not our country, and therefore here cannot be our portion; unless we choose, as did the prodigal, to go into a strange country, and spend our portion with riotous and beastly living, and forfeit our Father's blessing. The devil, carrying our blessed Saviour to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world; but, besides that they were offered upon ill conditions, they were not eligible by him upon any. And neither are they to be chosen by us for our inheritance and portion evangelical: for the gospel is founded upon "better promises," and therefore, the hopes of a christian ought not to determine

[n] Matt. xi. 5.
[o] Rom. v. 3. Gaudet patientia duris.
[p] James i. 2, 3. [q] 2 Cor. vii. 10.
[r] James iv. 9, 10.

Sic enim per oculos cùm notas turpes trahat,
Rursus per ipsos lacrymas fundit pias,
Egressione ut eluat quæ ingressa sunt.

Dum dolemus admissa, admittenda excludimus; et fit quædam de condemnatione culpæ disciplina innocentiæ.—S. AMBROS.

[s] Πραεῖς εἰσιν οἱ κατεσταλμένοι τὰ ἤθη, καὶ παντὸς πάθους ἀπηλλαγμένοι, ὡς μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ταραχὴν ἐνοικοῦσαν αὐτῶν ταῖς ψυχαῖς.—S. BASIL. in Psal. 33.

[t] Mansuetus et æquus secundùm Arist. est εὐτυχῶν μέτριος, et ἀτυχῶν μεγαλόψυχος.

"Οσσα τε δαιμονίησι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃσ, πρᾴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει.
PYTHAG. Carm. Aur.

Æquam memento rebus in arduis
Servare mentem; non secùs in bonis
Ab insolenti temperatam
Lætitiâ, moriture Deli.
HORAT. Carm. lib. ii. Od. 3.

Quem res plùs nimio delectavere secundæ,
Mutatæ quatient.——————Ad Fusc.

[u] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

[x] Ὁ θυμὸς φόνων αἴτιον, συμφορᾶς σύμμαχον, βλάβης σύνεργον καὶ ἀτιμίας, χρημάτων ἀπώλεια, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φθορᾶς ἀρχηγόν.—ARISTOT.

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upon any thing less than heaven. Indeed our blessed Saviour chose to describe this beatitude in the words of the Psalmist, so inviting his disciples to an excellent precept, by the insinuation of those Scriptures which themselves admitted. But as the earth, which was promised to the meek man in David's psalm, was no other earth but the *terra promissionis*, the land of Canaan; if we shall remember that this land of promise was but a transition and an allegory to a greater and more noble, that it was but a type of heaven, we shall not see cause to wonder why the holy Jesus, intending heaven for the reward of this grace also, together with the rest, did call it "the inheritance of the earth." For now is revealed to us "a new heaven and a new earth, a habitation made without hands, eternal in the heavens." And he understands nothing of the excellency of christian religion, whose affections dwell below, and are satisfied with a portion of dirt and corruption. "If we be risen with Christ, let us seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." But if a christian desires to take possession of this earth in his way, as his inheritance or portion, he hath reason to fear it will be his all. We have but one inheritance, one country; and here we are "strangers and pilgrims." Abraham told Dives that he had "enjoyed his good things here;" he had "the inheritance of the earth," in the crass material sense; and, therefore, he had no other portion but what the devils have. And when we remember that persecution is the lot of the church, and that poverty is her portion, and her quantum is but "food and raiment" at the best, and that patience is her support, and hope her refreshment, and self-denial her security, and meekness is all her possession and title to a subsistence; it will appear certain, that as Christ's "kingdom is not of this world," so neither shall his saints have their portion in that which is not his kingdom. They are miserable if they do not reign with him, and he never reigned here; but "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him" hereafter. True it is, Christ promised to him that should lose any interest for his sake, the restitution of "a hundred-fold in this world." But as the sense of that cannot be literal, for he cannot receive a hundred mothers or a hundred wives; so whatsoever that be, it is to be enjoyed "with persecution." And then such a portion of the earth as Christ hath expressed in figure, and shall, by way of recompence, restore us, and such a recompence as we can enjoy with persecution, and such an enjoyment as is consistent with our having lost all our temporals, and such an acquist and purchase of it as is not destructive of the grace of meekness; all that we may enter into our account as part of our lot, and the emanation from the holy promise. But in the foot of this account we shall not find any great affluence of temporal accruements. However it be, although when a meek man hath earthly possessions, by this grace he is taught how to use them, and how to part with them; yet if he hath them not, by the virtue here commanded, he is not suffered to use any thing violent towards the acquiring them, not so much as a violent passion, or a stormy imagination; for then he loses his meekness, and whatever he gets can be none of the reward of this grace. He that fights for temporals (unless by some other appendant duty he be obliged) loses his title, by striving incompetently for the reward; he cuts off that hand by which alone he can receive it. For unless he be indeed meek, he hath no right to what he calls "the inheritance of the earth;" and he that is not content to want the inheritance of the earth when God requires him, is not meek. So that if this beatitude be understood in a temporal sense, it is an offer of a reward upon a condition we shall be without it, and be content too: for, in every sense of the word, meekness implies a just satisfaction of the spirit, and acquiescence in every estate or contingency whatsoever, though we have no possessions but of a good conscience, no bread but that of carefulness, no support but from the Holy Spirit, and a providence ministering to our natural necessities, by an extemporary provision. And certain it is, the meekest of Christ's servants, the apostles and the primitive christians, had no other verification of this promise but this, that "rejoicing in tribulation, and knowing how to want, as well as how to abound, through many tribulations they entered into the kingdom of heaven:" for that is the country in which they are co-heirs with Jesus. But if we will certainly understand what this reward is, we may best know it by understanding the duty; and this we may best learn from him that gave it in commandment. "Learn of me, for I am meek," said the holy Jesus: and to him was promised, that "the uttermost ends of the earth should be his inheritance;" and yet he died first, and went to heaven, before it was verified to him in any sense, but only of content, and desire, and joy in suffering, and in all variety of accident. And thus also, if we be meek, we may receive the inheritance of the earth.

10. The acts of this grace are: 1. To submit to all the instances of Divine Providence,[y] not repining at any accident which God hath chosen for us, and given us as part of our lot, or a punishment of our deserving, or an instrument of virtue; not envying the gifts, graces, or prosperities of our neighbours. 2. To pursue the interest and employment of our calling in which we are placed, not despising the meanness of any work, though never so disproportionable to our abilities. 3. To correct all malice, wrath, evil-speaking, and inordinations of anger, whether in respect of the object or the degree. 4. At no hand to entertain any thoughts of revenge or retaliation of evil. 5. To be affable and courteous in our deportment towards all persons of our society and intercourse. 6. Not to censure or reproach the weakness of our neighbour, but support his burden,

[y] Non si malè nunc, et olim
Sic erit ———
Rebus angustis animosus atque
Fortis appare: sapienter idem
Contrahes vento nimiùm secundo
Turgida vela.—HOR. lib. ii. Od. 10.

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cover and cure his infirmities. 7. To excuse what may be excused, lessening severity, and being gentle in reprehension. 8. To be patient in afflictions, and thankful under the cross. 9. To endure reproof, with shame at ourselves for deserving it, and thankfulness to the charitable physician that offers the remedy.[a] 10. To be modest and fairly mannered toward our superiors, obeying, reverencing, speaking honourably of, and doing honour to, aged persons, and all whom God hath set over us, according to their several capacities. 11. To be ashamed and very apprehensive of the unworthiness of a crime; at no hand losing our fear of the invisible God, and our reverence to visible societies, or single persons.[a] 12. To be humble in our exterior addresses and behaviour in churches and all holy places. 13. To be temperate in government, not imperious, unreasonable, insolent, or oppressive, lest we provoke to wrath those, whose interest of person and of religion we are to defend or promote. 14. To do our endeavour to expiate any injury we did, by confessing the fact, and offering satisfaction, and asking forgiveness.

11. Fourthly: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." This grace is the greatest indication of spiritual health, when our appetite is right, strong, and regular; when we are desirous of spiritual nourishment, when we long for manna, and "follow Christ for loaves," not of a low and terrestrial gust, but of that "bread which came down from heaven." Now there are two sorts of holy repast which are the proper objects of our desires. The bread of heaven, which is proportioned to our hunger; that is, all those immediate emanations from Christ's pardon of our sins, and redemption from our former conversation, holy laws, and commandments. To this food there is also a spiritual beverage to quench our thirst: and this is the effects of the Holy Spirit, who first "moved upon the waters" of baptism, and afterwards became to us "the breath of life," giving us holy inspirations and assistances, refreshing our wearinesses, cooling our fevers, and allaying all our intemperate passions, making us holy, humble, resigned, and pure, "according to the pattern in the mount," even "as our Father is pure." So that the first redemption and pardon of us by Christ's merits is the bread of life, for which we must hunger; and the refreshments and daily emanations of the Spirit, who is the spring of comforts and purity, is that drink which we must thirst after: a being first reconciled to God by Jesus, and a being sanctified and preserved in purity by the Holy Spirit, is the adequate object of our desires. Some, to hunger and thirst best, fancy the analogy and proportion of the two sacraments, the waters of baptism, and the food of the eucharist; some, the bread of the patin, and the wine of the chalice. But it is certain they signify one desire, expressed by the most impatient and necessary of our appetites, hungering and thirsting. And the object is whatsoever is the principle or the effect, the beginning, or the way, or the end of righteousness; that is, the mercies of God, the pardon of Jesus, the graces of the Spirit, a holy life, a holy death, and a blessed eternity.

12. The blessing and reward of this grace is fulness or satisfaction: which relates immediately to heaven, because nothing here below can satisfy us. The grace of God is our viaticum, and entertains us by the way; its nature is to increase, not to satisfy, the appetites: not because the grace is empty and unprofitable, as are the things of the world; but because it is excellent, but yet in order to a greater perfection; it invites the appetite by its present goodness, but it leaves it unsatisfied, because it is not yet arrived at glory: and yet the present imperfection in respect of all the good of this world's possession, is rest and satisfaction, and is imperfect only in respect of its own future complement and perfection; and our hunger continues, and our needs return, because all we have is but an antepast. But the glories of eternity are also the proper object of our desires; that is the reward of God's grace, this is "the crown of righteousness." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."[b] The acts of this virtue are multiplied according to its object; for they are only, 1. to desire, and 2. pray for, and 3. labour for, all that which is righteousness in any sense: 1. for the pardon of our sins; 2. for the graces and sanctification of the Spirit; 3. for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; 4. for the reception of the holy sacrament, and all the instruments, ordinances, and ministries of grace; 5. for the grace of perseverance; 6. and finally, for the crown of righteousness.

13. Fifthly: "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Mercy is the greatest mark and token of the holy, elect, and predestinate persons in the world. "Put ye on, my beloved, as the elect of God, the bowels of mercy, holy and precious."[c] For mercy is an attribute, in the manifestation of which as all our happiness consists,[d] so God takes greatest complacency and delights in it above all his other works. "He punishes to the third and fourth generation, but shows mercy unto thousands." Therefore the Jews say, that Michael flies with one wing, and Gabriel with two; meaning, that the pacifying angel, the minister of mercy, flies swift, but the exterminating angel, the messenger of wrath, is slow. And we are called to our approximation to God by the practice

[a] Πρῶτον ἁγαθῶν, τὸ ἀναμάρτητον· δεύτερον δὲ, αἰσχύναι. MELIS. Disc. 19.
Neque ulli patientius reprehenduntur quàm qui maximè laudari merentur.—PLIN. lib. vii. c. 10.
Θρασυστομεῖν γὰρ οὐ πρέπει τοὺς ἥσσονας.—ÆSCH. Ἰκέτιδες.
[a] Salva res est, propter spem salutis quam promittit indoles erubescentis.—COMŒD.

Γηράσκων δ' ἀστοῖσι μεταπρέπει, οὐδὲ τις αὐτὸν
Βλάπτειν οὐδ' ἀδοῦν οὐδὲ δίκης ἐθέλει.—THEOG.
[b] Psalm xvii. 15. [c] Col. iii. 12.
[d] Neque enim sunt isti audiendi qui virtutem duram et quasi ferream esse volunt; quæ quidem est cùm in multis rebus, tum in amicitiâ, tenera atque tractabilis, ut et bonis amici quasi diffundantur, et incommodis contrahantur.—LÆLIUS apud M. T. Cic.

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of this grace; for we are made "partakers of the Divine nature" by being "merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful." This mercy consists in the affections, and in the effects and actions. In both which the excellency of this christian precept is eminent above the goodness of the moral precept of the old philosophers, and the piety and charity of the Jews by virtue of the Mosaic law. The Stoic philosophers affirm it to be the duty of a wise man to succour and help the necessities of indigent and miserable persons; but at no hand to pity them, or suffer any trouble or compassion in our affections: for they intended that a wise person should be dispassionate, unmoved, and without disturbance in every accident, and object, and concernment. But the blessed Jesus, who came to reconcile us to his Father, and purchase us an entire possession, did intend to redeem us from sin, and make our passions obedient and apt to be commanded, even and moderate in temporal affairs, but high and active in some instances of spiritual concernment; and in all instances, that the affection go along with the grace; that we must be as merciful in our compassion, as compassionate in our exterior expressions and actions. The Jews, by the prescript of their law, were to be merciful to all their nation and confederates in religion; and this their mercy was called justice: "He hath dispersed abroad and given to the poor, his righteousness (or justice) remaineth for ever." But the mercies of a christian are to extend to all: "Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith."[e] And this diffusion of a mercy, not only to brethren, but to aliens and enemies, is that which St. Paul calls "goodness,"[f] still retaining the old appellative for Judaical mercy, "righteousness:" "For scarcely for a righteous[g] man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some will even dare to die." So that the christian mercy must be a mercy of the whole man, the heart must be merciful, and the hand operating in "the labour of love;" and it must be extended to all persons of all capacities, according as their necessity requires, and our ability permits, and our endearments and other obligations dispose of and determine the order.

14. The acts of this grace are: 1. To pity the miseries of all persons, and all calamities, spiritual or temporal, having a fellow-feeling in their afflictions. 2. To be afflicted and sad in the public judgments imminent or incumbent upon a church, or state, or family. 3. To pray to God for remedy for all afflicted persons. 4. To do all acts of bodily assistance to all miserable and distressed people, to relieve the poor, to redeem captives, to forgive debts to disabled persons, to pay debts for them, to lend them money, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, to rescue persons from dangers, to defend and relieve the oppressed, to comfort widows and fatherless children, to help them to right that suffer wrong; and, in brief, to do any thing of relief, support, succour, and comfort. 5. To do all acts of spiritual mercy, to counsel the doubtful, to admonish the erring, to strengthen the weak, to resolve the scrupulous, to teach the ignorant, and any thing else which may be instrumental to his conversion, perseverance, restitution, and salvation, or may rescue him from spiritual dangers, or supply him in any ghostly necessity. The reward of this virtue is symbolical to the virtue itself, the grace and glory differing in nothing but degrees, and every virtue being a reward to itself. "The merciful shall receive mercy;" mercy "to help them in time of need;" mercy from God, who will not only give them the great mercies of pardon and eternity, but also dispose the hearts of others to pity and supply their needs, as they have done to others. For the present, there is nothing more noble than to be beneficial to others, and to "lift up the poor out of the mire," and rescue them from misery; it is to do the work of God:[h] and for the future, nothing is a greater title to a mercy, at the day of judgment, than to have shown mercy to our necessitous brother; it being expressed to be the only rule and instance in which Christ means to judge the world, in their mercy and charity, or their unmercifulness, respectively: "I was hungry and ye fed me," or ye fed me not: and so we stand or fall in the great and eternal scrutiny. And it was the prayer of St. Paul, (Onesiphorus showed kindness to the great apostle,) "The Lord show him a mercy in that day." For a cup of charity, though but full "of cold water, shall not lose its reward."

15. Sixthly: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." This purity of heart includes purity of hands. "Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? even he that is of clean hands and a pure heart;" that is, "he that hath not given his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour."[i] It signifies justice of action and candour of spirit, innocence of manners and sincerity of purpose; it is one of those great circumstances that consummate charity: "for the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."[k] "A pure heart;" that is, a heart free from all carnal affections, not only in the matter of natural impurity, but also spiritual and immaterial: such as are heresies, (which are therefore impurities, because they mingle secular interest or prejudice with persuasions in religion,) seditions, hurtful and impious stratagems, and all those which St. Paul enumerates to be "works" or "fruits of the flesh." "A good conscience;" that is, a conscience either innocent or penitent, a state of grace, either a not having prevaricated, or a being restored to our baptismal purity. "Faith unfeigned;" that also is the purity of sincerity, and excludes hypocrisy, timorous and half persuasions, neutrality and indifferency in matters of salvation. And all these do integrate the whole duty of charity. But purity, as it is a special grace, signifies only honesty and

[e] Gal. vi. 10. [f] Rom. v. 7.
[g] Syrus interpres non legit ὑπὲρ δικαίου, sed ἀδίκου, injusti.
[h] Bona comparat præsidia misericordia; et habet in adversis auxilia qui in secundis commodat.—PUBLIUS.

Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via.—SENECA.
[i] Psalm xxiv. 3, 4.
[k] 1 Tim. i. 5.

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uprightness of soul, without hypocrisy to God and dissimulation towards men; and then a freedom from all carnal desires, so as not to be governed or led by them. Chastity is the purity of the body, simplicity is the purity of the spirit; both are the sanctification of the whole man, for the entertainment of the Spirit of purity and the Spirit of truth.

16. The acts of this virtue are: 1. To quit all lustful thoughts, not to take delight in them, not to retain them or invite them, but, as objects of displeasure, to avert them from us. 2. To resist all lustful desires, and extinguish them by their proper correctories and remedies. 3. To refuse all occasions, opportunities, and temptations to impurity; denying to please a wanton eye, or to use a lascivious gesture, or to go into a danger, or to converse with an improper, unsafe object; "hating the garment spotted with the flesh," so St. Jude calls it; and "not to look upon a maid," so Job; "not to sit with a woman that is a singer," so the son of Sirach. 4. To be of a liberal soul, not mingling with affections of money and inclinations of covetousness, not doing any act of violence, rapine, or injustice. 5. To be ingenuous in our thoughts, purposes, and professions, speaking nothing contrary to our intentions, but being really what we seem. 6. To give all our faculties and affections to God, without dividing interests between God and his enemies, without entertaining of any one crime in society with our pretences for God. 7. Not to lie in sin, but instantly to repent of it[l] and return, "purifying our conscience from dead works." 8. Not to dissemble our faith or belief when we are required to its confession, pretending a persuasion complying with those from whom secretly we differ. Lust, covetousness, and hypocrisy, are the three great enemies of this grace; they are the motes of our eyes, and the spots of our souls. The reward of purity is the vision beatifical. If we are "pure as God is pure, we shall" also "see him as he is: when we awake up after his likeness, we shall behold his presence." To which in this world we are consigned by freedom from the cares of covetousness, the shame of lust, the fear of discovery, and the stings of an evil conscience, which are the portion of the several impurities here forbidden.

17. Seventhly: "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. The wisdom of God is first pure, and then peaceable:"[m] that is the order of the beatitudes. As soon as Jesus was born, the angels sang a hymn, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men;" signifying the two great errands upon which Christ was despatched in his legation from heaven to earth. He is "the Prince of Peace." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man ever shall see God." The acts of this grace are: 1. To mortify our anger, peevishness, and fiery dispositions, apt to enkindle upon every slight accident, inadvertency, or misfortune of a friend or servant. 2. Not to be hasty, rash, provocative, or upbraiding in our language. 3. To live quietly and serenely in our families and neighbourhoods. 4. Not to backbite, slander, misreport, or undervalue any man, carrying tales, or sowing dissension between brethren. 5. Not to interest ourselves in the quarrels of others, by abetting either part, except where charity calls us to rescue the oppressed; and then also to do a work of charity without mixtures of uncharitableness. 6. To avoid all suits of law, as much as is possible, without intrenching upon any other collateral obligation towards a third interest, or a necessary support for ourselves or great conveniency for our families; or, if we be engaged in law, to pursue our just interests with just means and charitable maintenance. 7. To endeavour by all means to reconcile disagreeing persons. 8. To endeavour, by affability and fair deportment, to win the love of our neighbours. 9. To offer satisfaction to all whom we have wronged or slandered, and to remit the offences of others, and, in trials of right, to find out the most charitable expedient to determine it, as by indifferent arbitration, or something like it. 10. To be open, free, and ingenuous, in reprehensions and fair expostulations with persons whom we conceive to have wronged us, that no seed of malice or rancour may be latent in us, and, upon the breath of a new displeasure, break out into a flame. 11. To be modest in our arguings, disputings, and demands, not laying great interest upon trifles. 12. To moderate, balance, and temper our zeal, by the rules of prudence and the allay of charity, that we quarrel not for opinions, nor entitle God in our impotent and mistaken fancies, nor lose charity for a pretence of an article of faith. 13. To pray heartily for our enemies, real or imaginary, always loving and being apt to benefit their persons, and to cure their faults by charitable remedies. 14. To abstain from doing all affronts, disgraces, slightings, and uncomely jeerings and mockings of our neighbour, not giving him appellatives of scorn or irrision. 15. To submit to all our superiors in all things, either doing what they command, or suffering what they impose; at no hand lifting our heel against those upon whom the characters of God, and the marks of Jesus, are imprinted in signal and eminent authority; such as are principally the king, and then the bishops, whom God hath set to "watch over our souls." 16. Not to invade the possessions of our neighbours, or commence war, but when we are bound by justice and legal trust to defend the rights of others, or our own, in order to our duty. 17. Not to "speak evil of dignities," or undervalue their persons, or publish their faults, or upbraid the levities of our governors; knowing that they also are designed by God, to be converted to us for castigation and amendment of us. 18. Not to be busy in other men's affairs. And then "the peace of God will rest upon us."[n] The reward is no less than the adoption and inheritance of sons; for "he hath given unto us power to be called the sons of God;" for he is the Father of peace, and the sons of peace are the sons of God, and therefore

[l] Plato vocat puritatem ἀπόκρισιν χειρόνων ἀπὸ βελτιόνων.
[m] James iii. 17.
[n] Phil. iv. 9. 1 Thess. v. 23. 2 Thess. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20.

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have a title to the inheritance of sons, to be heirs with God, and co-heirs with Christ, in the kingdom of peace, and essential and never-failing charity.[o]

18. Eighthly: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This being the hardest command in the whole discipline of Jesus, is fortified with a double blessedness; for it follows immediately, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you;" meaning, that all persecution for a cause of righteousness, though the affliction be instanced only in reproachful language, shall be a title to the blessedness. Any suffering, for any good or harmless action, is a degree of martyrdom. It being the greatest testimony in the world of the greatest love, to quit[p] that for God which hath possessed our most natural, regular, and orderly affections. It is a preferring God's cause before our own interest; it is a loving of virtue without secular ends; it is the noblest, the most resigned, ingenuous, valiant act in the world, to die for God, whom we never have seen; it is the crown of faith, the confidence of hope, and our greatest charity. The primitive churches living under persecution commenced many pretty opinions concerning the state and special dignity of martyrs, apportioning to them one of the three coronets which themselves did knit, and supposed as pendants to the great "crown of righteousness." They made it suppletory of baptism, expiatory of sin, satisfactory of public penances; they placed them in bliss[q] immediately, declared them to need no after-prayer, such as the devotion of those times used to pour upon the graves of the faithful: with great prudence they did endeavour to alleviate this burden, and sweeten the bitter chalice; and they did it by such doctrines, which did only remonstrate this great truth, That since "no love was greater than to lay down our lives," nothing could be so great but God would indulge to them. And indeed, whatsoever they said in this had no inconvenience, nor would it now, unless men should think mere suffering to be sufficient to excuse a wicked life, or that they be invited to dishonour an excellent patience with the mixture of an impure action. There are many who would die for Christ if they were put to it, and yet will not quit a lust[r] for him: those are hardly to be esteemed Christ's martyrs: unless they be "dead unto sin," their dying for an article or a good action will not pass the great scrutiny. And it may be boldness of spirit, or sullenness, or an honourable gallantry of mind, or something that is excellent in civil and political estimate, moves the person, and endears the suffering; but that love only "which keeps the commandments" will teach us to die for love, and from love to pass to blessedness through the red sea of blood. And, indeed, it is more easy to die for chastity, than to live with it:[s] and many women have been found, who suffered death under the violence of tyrants for defence of their holy vows and purity, who, had they long continued amongst pleasures, courtships, curiosities, and importunities of men, might perchance have yielded that to a lover, which they denied to an executioner. St. Cyprian observes, that our blessed Lord, in admitting the innocent babes of Bethlehem first to die for him, did, to all generations of christendom, consign this lesson, That only persons holy and innocent were fit to be Christ's martyrs. And I remember, that the prince of the Latin poets,[t] over against the regions and seats of infants, places in the shades below persons that suffered death wrongfully; but adds, that this their death was not enough to place them in such blessed mansions, but the Judge first made inquiry into their lives, and accordingly designed their station. It is certain, that such dyings, or great sufferings, are heroical actions, and of power to make great compensations, and redemptions of time, and of omissions and imperfections; but if the man be unholy, so also are his sufferings:[u] for heretics have died, and vicious persons have suffered in a good cause, and a dog's neck may be cut off in sacrifice, and swine's blood may fill the trench about the altar: but God only accepts the sacrifice which is pure and spotless, first seasoned with salt, then seasoned with fire. The true martyr must have all the preceding graces, and then he shall receive all the beatitudes.

19. The acts of this duty are: 1. Boldly to confess the faith, nobly to exercise public virtues, not to be ashamed of any thing that is honest, and rather to quit our goods, our liberty, our health, and life itself, than to deny what we are bound to affirm, or to omit what we are bound to do, or to pretend contrary to our present persuasion. 2. To rejoice in afflictions; counting it honourable to be conformable to Christ, and to wear the cognizance of christianity, whose certain lot it is to suffer the hostility and violence of enemies, visible and invisible. 3. Not to revile our persecutors, but to bear the cross with evenness, tranquillity, patience, and charity. 4. To offer our sufferings to the glory of God, and to join them with the passions of Christ, by doing it in love to God, and obedience to his sanctions, and testimony of some part of his religion, and designing it as a part of duty. The reward is "the kingdom of heaven;" which can be no other but eternal salvation, in case the martyrdom be consummate: and "they also shall be made perfect:"[x] so the words of the reward were read in Clement's time. If it be less, it keeps its proportion: all suffering persons are the combination of saints; they make the church, they are the people of the kingdom, and heirs of the

[o] Rom. viii. 17.

[p] ——Dulce periculum est,
O Lenæe, sequi deum
Cingentem viridi tempora pampino.
HOR. lib. iii. Od. 25.

[q] Animas prælio aut suppliciis peremptorum æternas putant. Hinc moriendi contemptus.—C. TACITUS de Judæis.

[r] Non est autem consentaneum, qui metu non frangatur, eum frangi cupiditate; nec qui invictum se à labore præstiterit, vinci à voluptate.—CIC. de Offic. lib. i.

[s] Tertul. de Castit.

[t] Hos juxta falso damnati crimine mortis.
Nec verò hæ sine sorte datæ, sine judice, sedes;
Quæsitor Minos urnam movet; ille silentûm
Conciliumque vocat, vitasque et crimina discit.
VIRG. Æneid. 6.

[u] Athleta non vincit statim quia eruitur, nec ideo transnatant quia se spoliavit.—SEVER. Ep. 2.

[x] "Ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἔσονται τέλειοι.

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covenant. For if they be but confessors, and confess Christ in prison, though they never preach upon the rack or under the axe, yet "Christ will confess them before his heavenly Father;" and "they shall have a portion where they shall never be persecuted any more."[y]

THE PRAYER.

I.

O blessed Jesus, who art become to us the fountain of peace and sanctity, of righteousness and charity, of life and perpetual benediction, imprint in our spirits these glorious characterisms of christianity, that we by such excellent dispositions may be consigned to the infinity of blessedness, which thou camest to reveal, and minister, and exhibit to mankind. Give us great humility of spirit; and deny us not, when we beg sorrow of thee, the mourning and sadness of true penitents, that we may imitate thy excellencies, and conform to thy sufferings. Make us meek, patient, indifferent, and resigned in all accidents, changes, and issues of Divine Providence. Mortify all inordinate anger in us, all wrath, strife, contention, murmurings, malice, and envy: and interrupt, and then blot out, all peevish dispositions and morosities, all disturbances and unevenness of spirit or of habit, that may hinder us in our duty. Oh teach me so to "hunger and thirst after" the ways of "righteousness," that it may be "meat and drink" to me "to do thy Father's will." Raise my affections to heaven and heavenly things, fix my heart there, and prepare a treasure for me, which I may receive in the great diffusions and communications of thy glory. And, in this sad interval of infirmity and temptations, strengthen my hopes, and fortify my faith, by such emissions of light and grace from thy Spirit, that I may relish those blessings which thou preparest for thy saints with so great appetite, that I may despise the world and all its gilded vanities, and may desire nothing but the crown of righteousness, and the paths that lead thither, the graces of thy kingdom and the glories of it; that when I have served thee in holiness and strict obedience, I may reign with thee in the glories of eternity: for thou, O holy Jesus, art our hope, and our life, and glory, our exceeding great reward. Amen.

II.

Merciful Jesu, who art infinitely pleased in demonstrations of thy mercy, and didst descend into a state of misery, suffering persecution and affronts, that thou mightest give us thy mercy, and reconcile us to thy Father, and make us partakers of thy purities; give unto us tender bowels, that we may suffer together with our calamitous and necessitous brethren, that we, having a fellow-feeling of their miseries, may use all our powers to help them, and ease ourselves of our common sufferings. But do thou, O holy Jesu, take from us also all our great calamities, the carnality of our affections, our sensualities and impurities, that we may first be pure, then peaceable, living in peace with all men, and preserving the peace which thou hast made for us with our God, that we may never commit a sin which may interrupt so blessed an atonement. Let neither hope nor fear, tribulation nor anguish, pleasure nor pain, make us to relinquish our interest in thee, and our portion of the everlasting covenant. But give us hearts constant, bold, and valiant, to confess thee before all the world in the midst of all disadvantages and contradictory circumstances, choosing rather to beg, or to be disgraced, or afflicted, or to die, than quit a holy conscience, or renounce an article of christianity: that we, either in acts, when thou shalt call us, or always in preparation of mind, suffering with thee, may also reign with thee in the church triumphant, O holy and most merciful Saviour Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE X.

A Discourse upon that Part of the Decalogue, which the Holy Jesus adopted into the Institution and Obligation of Christianity.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus had described the characterisms of christianity, in these eight graces and beatitudes, he adds his injunctions, that in these virtues they should be eminent and exemplar, that they might adorn the doctrine of God; for he intended that the gospel should be as leaven in a lump of dough, to season the whole mass; and that christians should be the instruments of communicating the excellency and reputation of this holy institution to all the world. Therefore, Christ calls them salt, and light; and the societies of christians, "a city set upon a hill," and "a light set in a candlestick," whose office and energy is to illuminate all the vicinage; which is also expressed in these preceptive words: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;" which I consider not only as a circumstance of other parts, but as a precise duty itself, and one of the sanctions of christianity; which hath so confederated the souls of the disciples of the institution, that it hath in some proportion obliged every man to take care of his brother's soul.[a] And since reverence to God, and charity to our brother, are the two greatest ends which the best laws can have, this precept of exemplary living is enjoined in order to them both: we must "shine as lights in the world," that God may be glorified, and our brother edified; that the excellency of the act may endear the reputation of the

[y] Sic etiam olim legebatur hæc periodus; ὅτι ἕξουσι τόπον ὅπου οὐ διωχθήσονται.

[z] "Ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχὴ, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί.—JUST. MART.

Sic S. Paulus, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ.—Phil. ii. 15.

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religion, and invite men to confess God, according to the sanctions of so holy an institution. And if we be curious that vanity do not mingle in the intention, and that the intention do not spoil the action, and that we suffer not our lights to shine, that men may magnify us, and not glorify God; this duty is soon performed, by way of adherence to our other actions, and hath no other difficulty in it, but that it will require our prudence and care, to preserve the simplicity of our purposes, and humility of our spirit, in the midst of that excellent reputation, which will certainly be consequent to a holy and exemplary life.

2. But, since the holy Jesus had set us up to be lights in the world, he took care we should not be stars of the least magnitude, but eminent, and such as might, by their great emissions of light, give evidence of their being immediately derivative from the Sun of righteousness. He was now giving his law; and meant to retain so much of Moses, as Moses had of natural and essential justice and charity, and superadd many degrees of his own; that as far as Moses was exceeded by Christ in the capacity of a lawgiver, so far christianity might be more excellent and holy than the Mosaical sanctions. And, therefore, as a preface to the christian law, the holy Jesus declares, that "unless our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," that is, of the stricter sects of the Mosaical institution, "we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Which not only relates to the prevaricating practices of the Pharisees, but even to their doctrines and commentaries upon the law of Moses, as appears evidently in the following instances. For if all the excellency of christianity had consisted in the mere command of sincerity, and prohibition of hypocrisy, it had nothing in it proportionable to those excellent promises and clearest revelations of eternity there expressed; nor of a fit employment for the designation of a special and a new Lawgiver, whose laws were to last for ever, and were established upon foundations stronger than the pillars of heaven and earth.

3. But St. Paul, calling the law of Moses, "a law of works,"[b] did well insinuate what the doctrine of the Jews was, concerning the degrees and obligations of justice: for besides that it was a law of works, in opposition to the law of faith, (and so the sense of it is formerly explicated,[c]) it is also a law of works, in opposition to the law of the Spirit; and it is understood to be such a law, which required the exterior obedience; such a law, according to which St. Paul so lived, that no man could reprove him; that is, the judges could not tax him with prevarication; such a law, which, being in very many degrees carnal and material, did not with much severity exact the intention and purposes spiritual. But the gospel is "the law of the Spirit." If they failed in the exterior work, it was accounted to them for sin; but to christians nothing becomes a sin, but a failing and prevaricating spirit. For the outward act is such an emanation of the interior, that it enters into the account, for the relation's sake, and for its parent. When God hath put a duty into our hands, if our spirits be right, the work will certainly follow; but the following work receives its acceptation, not from the value the christian law hath precisely put upon it, but because the spirit from whence it came hath observed its rule. The law of charity is acted and expressed in works, but hath its estimate from the spirit. Which discourse is to be understood in a limited and qualified signification. For then also God required the heart, and interdicted the very concupiscences of our irregular passions, at least in some instances; but because much of their law consisted in the exterior, and the law appointed not, nor yet intimated, any penalty to evil thoughts, and because the expiation of such interior irregularities was easy, implicit, and involved in their daily sacrifices, without special trouble; therefore the old law was "a law of works," that is, especially and in its first intention. But this being less perfect, the holy Jesus inverted the order. 1. For very little of christianity stands upon the outward action (Christ having appointed but two sacraments immediately): and, 2. a greater restraint is laid upon the passions, desires, and first motions of the Spirit, than under the severity of Moses: and, 3. they are threatened with the same curses of a sad eternity, with the acts proceeding from them: and, 4. because the obedience of the spirit does in many things excuse the want of the outward act, God always requiring at our hands what he hath put in our power, and no more: and, 5. lastly, because the spirit is the principle of all actions,[d] moral and spiritual, and certainly productive of them, when they are not impeded from without; therefore the holy Jesus hath secured the fountain, as knowing that the current must needs be healthful and pure, if it proceeds through pure channels, from a limpid and unpolluted principle.

4. And, certainly, it is much for the glory of God, to worship him with a religion, whose very design looks upon God as "the Searcher of our hearts" and Lord of our spirits; who judges the purposes as a God, and does not only take his estimate from the outward action as a man. And it is also a great reputation to the institution itself, that it purifies the soul, and secures the secret cogitations of the mind. It punishes covetousness, as it judges rapine; it condemns a sacrilegious heart,[e] as soon as an irreligious hand; it detests hating of our brother, by the same aversation which it expresses against doing him affronts. He that curses in his heart, shall die the death of an explicit and bold blasphemer; murmuring and repining is against the laws of christianity; but either by the

[b] Rom. iii. 27.

[c] Vide Considerat. of Christ's first Preaching, n. 3.

[d] Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν δίκαιος, ἀλλ' εἶναι, θέλει,
Βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
Ἀφ' ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα.
AMPHIAR. apud Æschyl.

[e] Josephus reprehendit Polybium, quòd mortem Antiochi inflictam dixit ob cogitatum scelus sacrilegii, putans pœnam non irrogari nisi ob perpetratum facinus: τὸ γὰρ μηκέτι ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον βουλευσάμενον, οὐκ ἦν τιμωρίας ἄξιόν.

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remissness of Moses's law, or the gentler execution of it, or the innovating or lessening glosses of the Pharisees, he was esteemed innocent whose actions were according to the letter, not whose spirit was conformed to the intention and more secret sanctity of the law. So that our righteousness must therefore exceed the Pharisaical standard, because our spirits must be pure as our hands, and the heart as regular as the action; our purposes must be sanctified, and our thoughts holy; we must love our neighbour as well as relieve him, and choose justice with adhesion of the mind, as well as carry her upon the palms of our hands. And, therefore, the prophets, foretelling the kingdom of the gospel, and the state of this religion, call it "a writing the laws of God in our hearts." And St. Paul distinguishes the gospel from the law, by this only measure: We are all Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, heirs of the same inheritance; only now we are not to be accounted Jews, for the outward conformity to the law, but for the inward consent and obedience to those purities, which were secretly signified by the types of Moses. They of the law were "Jews outwardly;" their "circumcision was outward in the flesh," their "praise was of men:"[f] we are "Jews inwardly;" our "circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, and our praise is of God;" that is, we are not judged by the outward act, but by the mind and the intention; and though the acts must follow in all instances where we can, and where they are required, yet it is the less principal, and rather significative, than by its own strength and energy operative, and accepted.

5. St. Clement of Alexandria saith, the Pharisees' righteousness consisted in the not doing evil;[g] and that Christ superadded this also, that we must do the contrary good, and so exceed the Pharisaical measure. They would not wrong a Jew, nor many times relieve him; they reckoned their innocence by not giving offence, by walking blameless, by not being accused before the judges sitting in the gates of their cities. But the balance in which the Judge of quick and dead weighs christians, is, not only the avoiding evil, but doing good; the "following peace with all men, and holiness;" the proceeding "from faith to faith;" the "adding virtue to virtue;" the persevering "in all holy conversation and godliness." And therefore, St. Paul,[h] commending the grace of universal charity, says, that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law;" implying, that the prime intention of the law was, that every man's right be secured, that no man receive wrong. And, indeed, all the decalogue consisting of prohibitions rather than precepts, saving that each table hath one positive commandment, does not obscurely verify the doctrine of St. Clement's interpretation. Now, because the christian charity abstains from doing all injury, therefore it is the fulfilling of the law: and because it is also patient and liberal, that it suffers long, and is kind; therefore the charity commanded in Christ's law, exceeds that charity which the scribes and Pharisees reckoned as part of their righteousness. But Jesus himself does, with great care in the particulars, instance in what he would have the disciples to be eminent, above the most strict sect of the Jewish religion. 1. In practising the moral precepts of the decalogue, with a stricter interpretation; 2. and in quitting the permissions and licenses, which, for the hardness of their heart, Moses gave them, as indulgences to their persons and securities against the contempt of too severe laws.

6. The severity of exposition was added but to three commandments, and in three indulgences the permission was taken away. But, because our great Lawgiver repeated also other parts of the decalogue in his after-sermons,[i] I will represent, in this one view, all that he made to be christian by adoption.

The First Commandment.

7. The first commandment Christ often repeated and enforced, as being the basis of all religion, and the first endearment of all that relation, whereby we are capable of being the sons of God; as being the great commandment of the law, and comprehensive of all that duty we owe to God, in the relations of the virtue of religion: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord;" and "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."[k] This is the first commandment; that is, this comprehends all that which is moral and eternal in the first table of the decalogue.

8. The duties of this commandment are: 1. To worship God alone, with actions proper to him; and, 2. to love, and, 3. obey him with all our faculties. 1. Concerning worship. The actions proper to the honour of God are, to offer sacrifice, incense, and oblations; making vows to him, swearing by his name as the instrument of secret testimony, confessing his incommunicable attributes, and praying to him for those graces which are essentially annexed to his dispensation; as remission of sins, gifts of the Spirit, and the grace of sanctification, and life eternal. Other acts of religion, such as are uncovering the head, bowing the knee, falling upon our face, stooping to the ground, reciting praises, are, by the consent of nations, used as testimonies of civil or religious veneration, and do not always pass for confessions of a Divinity; and, therefore, may be, without sin, used to angels, or kings, or governors, or to persons in any sense more excellent than ourselves, provided they be intended to express an excellency no greater than is proper to their dignities and persons; not in any sense given to an idol, or false gods. But the first sort are such, which all the world hath consented to be actions of Divine and incommunicable adoration; and such which God also, in several religions, hath reserved as his own appropriate regalities; and are idolatry, if given to any angel or man.

[f] Rom. ii. 28, 29.
[g] Virtus est vitio caruisse———— Optimus est qui minimis urgetur.

[h] Rom. xiii. 10.
[i] Luke xviii. 20. Mark x. 19. Matt. xix. 18, Rom. xiii. 9.
[k] Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30. Luke x. 27.

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9. The next duties are: 2. Love; 3. and obedience; but they are united in the gospel: "This is love, that we keep his commandments." And since we are, for God's sake, bound also to love others, this love is appropriate to God by the extension of parts, and the intension of degrees. The extension signifies, that we must serve God with all our faculties; for all division of parts is hypocrisy, and a direct prevarication: our heart must think what our tongue speaks, our hands act what we promise or purpose; and God's enemies must have no share, so much as in appearance or dissimulation. Now no creature can challenge this; and if we do justice to our neighbour, though unwillingly, we have done him no injury; for in that case he only who sees the irregularity of our thoughts is the person injured. And when we swear to him, our heart must swear as well as our tongue, and our hands must pay what our lips have promised; or else we provoke him with an imperfect sacrifice; we love him not with all our mind, with all our strength, and all our faculties.

10. But the difficulty and question of this commandment lies in the intention. For it is not enough to serve God with every capacity, passion, and faculty; but it must be every degree of every faculty, all the latitude of our will, all the whole intention of our passions, all the possibility and energy of our senses and our understanding: which, because it is to be understood according to that moderate sentence and account which God requires of us, set in the midst of such a condition, so attended, and depressed, and prejudiced, the full sense of it I shall express in several propositions.

11. First: The intention of the love to which we are obliged, requires not the degree which is absolutely the greatest, and simply the most perfect. For there are degrees of grace, every one of which is pleasing to God, and is a state of reconciliation and atonement: and he that "breaks not the bruised reed," nor "quenches the smoking flax," loves to cherish those endeavours which, beginning from small principles, pass through the variety of degrees, and give demonstration, that though it be our duty to contend for the best, yet this contention is with an enemy; and that enemy makes an abatement; and that abatement being an imperfection, rather than a sin, is actually consistent with the state of grace, the endeavour being in our power, and not the success; the perfection is that which shall be our reward, and therefore is not our present duty. And, indeed, if to do the best action, and to love God as we shall do in heaven, were a present obligation, it would have been clearly taught us, what is simply the best action; whereas now, that which is of itself better, in certain circumstances is less perfect, and sometimes not lawful; and concerning those circumstances, we have no rules, nor any guide but prudence and probable inducements: so that it is certain, in our best endeavours we should only increase our scruples, instead of doing actions of the highest perfections; we should erect a tyranny over our consciences, and no augmentation of any thing but the trouble. And, therefore, in the law of Moses, when this commandment was given in the same words, yet that the sense of it might be clear, the analogy of the law declared that their duty had a latitude, and that God was not so strict a taskmaster, but that he left many instances of piety to the voluntary devotion of his servants, that they might receive the reward of "free-will offerings." But if these words had obliged them to the greatest degree, that is, to all the degrees of our capacities in every instance, every act of religion had been duty and necessity.

12. And thus also it was in the gospel. Ananias and Sapphira were killed, by sentence from heaven, for not performing what was in their power at first not to have promised; but because they brought an obligation upon themselves which God brought not, and then prevaricated, they paid the forfeiture of their lives. St. Paul took no wages of the Corinthian churches, but wrought night and day with his own hand;[1] but himself says he had power to do otherwise. "There was laid upon him a necessity to preach," but no necessity to preach without wages and support. There is a good and a better in virginity and marriage; and yet there is no command in either, but that we abstain from sin: we are left to our own election for the particular, having "no necessity, but power in our will."[m] David prayed "seven times a day," and Daniel prayed "three times;" and both were beloved of God. The christian masters were not bound to manumit their slaves, and yet were commended if they did so. Sometimes the christians fled in persecution; St. Paul did so, and St. Peter did so, and St. Cyprian did so, and St. Athanasius, and many more; but time was, when some of these also chose to suffer death rather than to fly. And if to fly be a permission, and no duty, there is certainly a difference of degrees in the choice; to fly is not so great a suffering as to die, and yet a man may innocently choose the easier. And our blessed Lord himself, who never failed of any degree of his obligations, yet at some time prayed with more zeal and fervour than at other times, as a little before his passion. Since, then, at all times he did not do actions of that degree which is absolutely the greatest; it is evident that God's goodness is so great, as to be content with such a love which parts no share between him and sin; and leaves all the rest under such a liberty, as is only encouraged by those extraordinary rewards and crowns proportioned to heroical endeavours. It was a pretty question, which was moved in the solitudes of Nitria, concerning two religious brothers;[n] the one gave all his goods to the poor at once, the other kept the inheritance, and gave all the revenue. None of all the fathers knew which was absolutely the better; at once to renounce all, or, by repetition of charitable acts, to divide it into portions: one act of charity in an heroical degree, or an habitual charity in the degree of virtue. This instance is probation enough, that the opinion of such a necessity of doing the best action, simply and indefinitely, is impossible to be safely acted,

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9. [m] 1 Cor. vii. 37. [n] Histor. Lausid.

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because it is impossible to be understood. Two talents shall be rewarded, and so shall five, both in their proportions: "he that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly," but he shall reap: "every man as he purposes in his heart, so let him give." The best action shall have the best reward; and though he is the happiest who rises highest, yet he is not safest that enters into the state of disproportion to his person. I find, in the lives of the later reputed saints, that St. Teresa à Jesu made a vow to do every thing which she should judge to be the best.[o] I will not judge the person, nor censure the action, because possibly her intention and desires were of greatest sanctity; but whosoever considers the story of her life, and the strange repugnancies in the life of man to such undertakings, must needs fear to imitate an action of such danger and singularity. The advice which, in this case, is safest to be followed, is, that we employ our greatest industry, that we fall not into sin, and actions of forbidden nature; and then strive, by parts and steps, and with much wariness, in attempering our zeal, to superadd degrees of eminence, and observation of the more perfect instances of sanctity; that, doing some excellencies which God hath not commanded, he may be the rather moved to pardon our prevaricating so many parts of our necessary duty. If love transport us, and carry us to actions sublime and heroical, let us follow so good a guide, and pass on with diligence, and zeal, and prudence, as far as love will carry us:[p] but let us not be carried to actions of great eminence, and strictness, and unequal severities, by scruple and pretence of duty; lest we charge our miscarriages upon God, and call the yoke of the gospel insupportable, and Christ a hard task-master. But we shall pass from virtue to virtue with more safety, if a spiritual guide take us by the hand; only remembering, that if the angels themselves, and the beatified souls, do now, and shall hereafter, differ in degrees of love and glory, it is impossible the state of perfection should be confined to the highest love, and the greatest degree, and such as admits no variety, no increment, or difference of parts and stations.

13. Secondly: Our love to God consists not in any one determinate degree, but hath such a latitude as best agrees with the condition of men, who are of variable natures, different affections and capacities, changeable abilities, and which receive their heightenings and declensions according to a thousand accidents of mortality. For when a law is regularly prescribed to persons, whose varieties and different constitutions cannot be regular or uniform, it is certain God gives a great latitude of performance, and binds not to just atoms and points. The laws of God are like universal objects, received into the faculty, partly by choice, partly by nature; but the variety of perfection is by the variety of the instruments, and disposition of the recipient; and they are excelled by each other in several senses, and by themselves at several times. And so is the practice of our obedience, and the entertainments of the Divine commandments; for some are of malleable natures, others are morose; some are of healthful and temperate constitutions, others are lustful, full of fancy, full of appetite; some have excellent leisure and opportunities of retirement, others are busy in an active life, and cannot, with advantage, attend to the choice of the better part; some are peaceable and timorous, and some are in all instances serene; others are of tumultuous and unquiet spirits: and these become opportunities of temptation on one side, and on the other occasions of virtue: but every change of faculty and variety of circumstance hath influence upon morality; and, therefore, their duties are personally altered, and increase in obligation, or are slackened by necessities, according to the infinite alteration of exterior accidents and interior possibilities.

14. Thirdly: Our love to God must be totally exclusive of any affection to sin, and engage us upon a great, assiduous, and laborious care, to resist all temptations, to subdue sin, to acquire the habits of virtues, and live holily; as it is already expressed in the Discourse of Repentance. We must prefer God as the object of our hopes, we must choose to obey him rather than man, to please him rather than satisfy ourselves, and we must do violence to our strongest passions, when they once contest against a Divine commandment. If our passions are thus regulated, let them be fixed upon any lawful object whatsoever, if, at the same time, we prefer heaven and heavenly things, that is, would rather choose to lose our temporal love than our eternal hopes; (which we can best discern by our refusing to sin upon the solicitation or engagement of the temporal object;) then, although we feel the transportation of a sensual love towards a wife, or child, or friend, actually more pungent and sensible than passions of religion are, they are less perfect, but they are not criminal. Our love to God requires that we do his commandments, and that we do not sin; but in other things we are permitted, in the condition of our nature, to be more sensitively moved by visible than by invisible and spiritual objects. Only this; we must ever have a disposition and a mind prepared to quit our sensitive and pleasant objects, rather than quit a grace, or commit a sin. Every act of sin is against the love of God, and every man does many single actions of hostility and provocation against him; but the state of the love of God is that which we actually call the state of grace. When Christ reigns in us, and sin does not reign, but the spirit is quickened, and the lusts are mortified; when we are habitually virtuous, and do acts of piety, temperance, and justice, frequently, easily, cheerfully, and with a successive, constant, moral, and humane industry, according to the talent which God hath intrusted to us in the banks of nature and grace; then we are in the love of God, then we "love him with all our heart." But if sin grows upon us, and is committed more frequently, or gets a victory with less difficulty, or is obeyed more readily, or entertained with a freer complacency; then we love not God as he requires;

[o] Πᾶν τὸ βέλτιστον φαινόμενον ἔστω σοι νόμος ἀπαράβατος.—EPICT. c. 75.

[p] Σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ γὰρ μέγ' ἔξεστι φρονεῖν.—SOPHOC. Ajac.

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we divide between him and sin, and God is not the Lord of all our faculties. But the instances of Scripture are the best exposition of this commandment; for David "followed God with all his heart, to do that which was right in his eyes;"[q] and Josiah "turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might."[r] Both these kings did it: and yet there was some imperfection in David, and more violent recessions: for so saith the Scripture of Josiah, "Like unto him was there no king before him;" David was not so exact as he, and yet he "followed God with all his heart." From which these two corollaries are certainly deducible: that to love God with all our heart admits variety of degrees, and the lower degree is yet a love with all our heart; and yet to love God requires a holy life, a diligent walking in the commandments, either according to the sense of innocence or of penitence, either by first or second counsels, by the spirit of regeneration, or the spirit of renovation and restitution. The sum is this: the sense of this precept is such as may be reconciled with the infirmities of our nature, but not with a vice in our manners; with the recession of single acts, seldom done, and always disputed against, and long fought with, but not with an habitual aversation, or a ready obedience to sin, or an easy victory.

15. This commandment, being the sum of the first table, had, in Moses's law, particular instances which Christ did not insert into his institution; and he added no other particular, but that which we call the third commandment, concerning veneration and reverence to the name of God. The other two, viz. concerning images and the sabbath, have some special considerations.

The Second Commandment.

16. The Jews receive daily offence against the catechisms of some churches, who, in the recitation of the decalogue, omit the second commandment, as supposing it to be a part of the first, according as we account them; and their offence rises higher, because they observe, that in the New Testament, where the decalogue is six times repeated, in special recitation and in summaries, there is no word prohibiting the making, retaining, or respect of images.[s] Concerning which things christians consider, that God forbade the Jews the very having and making images and representments, not only of the true God, or of false and imaginary deities, but of visible creatures,[t] which, because it was but of temporary reason, and relative consideration of their aptness to superstition, and their conversing with idolatrous nations, was a command proper to the nation, part of their covenant, not of essential, indispensable, and eternal reason, not of that which we usually call "the law of nature." Of which also God gave testimony, because himself commanded the signs and representment of seraphim to be set upon the mercy-seat, toward which the priest and the people made their addresses in their religious adorations; and of the brazen serpent, to which they looked when they called to God for help against the sting of the venomous snakes. These instances tell us, that to make pictures or statues of creatures is not against a natural reason; and that they may have uses which are profitable, as well as be abused to danger and superstition. Now, although the nature of that people was apt to the abuse, and their intercourse with the nations in their confines was too great an invitation to entertain the danger; yet christianity hath so far removed that danger, by the analogy and design of the religion, by clear doctrines, revelations, and infinite treasures of wisdom, and demonstrations of the Spirit, that our blessed Lawgiver thought it not necessary to remove us from superstition by a prohibition of the use of images and pictures: and, therefore, left us to the sense of the great commandment, and the dictates of right reason, to take care that we do not dishonour the invisible God with visible representations of what we never saw, nor cannot understand, nor yet convey any of God's incommunicable worship in the fore-named instances to any thing but himself. And for the matter of images we have no other rule left us in the New Testament; the rules of reason and nature, and the other parts of the institution, are abundantly sufficient for our security. And possibly St. Paul might relate to this, when he affirmed, concerning the fifth, that "it was the first commandment with promise." For in the second commandment to the Jews, as there was a great threatening, so also a greater promise of "showing mercy to a thousand generations." But because the body of this commandment was not transcribed into the christian law, the first of the decalogue which we retain, and in which a promise is inserted, is the fifth commandment. And, therefore, the wisdom of the church was remarkable in the variety of sentences concerning the permission of images. At first, when they were blended in the danger and impure mixtures of gentilism, and men were newly recovered from the snare, and had the relics of a long custom to superstitious and false worshippings, they endured no images, but merely civil; but as the danger ceased, and christianity prevailed, they found that pictures had a natural use of good concernment, to move less knowing people by the representment and declaration of a story; and then they, knowing themselves permitted to the liberties of christianity, and the restraints of nature and reason, and not being still weak under prejudice and childish dangers, but fortified by the excellency of a wise religion, took them into lawful uses, doing honour to saints, as unto the absent emperors, according to the custom of the empire; they erected statues to their honour, and transcribed

[q] 1 Kings xiv. 8. [r] 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

[s] Ὁ Μωσῆς τὰς δοκίμους καὶ γλαφυρὰς τέχνας, ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιΐαν, ἐκ τῆς κατ' ἀυτὸν πολιτείας ἐξήλασε. PHILO de Gigant.

Vide Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. iv. 16. vii. 5. Num. xxxiii. 52.

[t] Imò et Ecclesia 8 Novemb. celebrat martyrium Claudii Nicostrati et sociorum, qui, cùm peritissimi fuerant statuarii, mortem potiùs ferre, quàm Gentilibus simulacra facere, maluerunt.

Ἄγαλμα οὐ κατεσκεύασε, διὰ τὸ μὴ νομίζειν ἀνθρωπόμορφον εἶναι τὸν Θεόν.—DIODOR. Sic de Moyse.

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a history, and sometimes a precept, into a table, by figures making more lasting impressions than by words and sentences. While the church stood within these limits, she had natural reason for her warrant, and the custom of the several countries, and no precept of Christ to countermand it: they who went farther were unreasonable, and, according to the degree of that excess, were superstitious.

17. The duties of this commandment are learned by the intents of it: for it was directed against the false religion of the nations who believed the images of their gods to be filled with the Deity; and it was also a caution, to prevent our low imaginations of God, lest we should come to think God to be like man.[u] And thus far there was indispensable and eternal reason in the precept: and this was never lessened in any thing by the holy Jesus, and obliges us christians to make our addresses and worshippings to no God but the God of the christians, that is, of all the world; and not to do this in or before an image of him, because he cannot be represented. For the images of Christ and his saints, they come not into either of the two considerations; and we are to understand our duty by the proportions of our reverence to God, expressed in the great commandment. Our fathers in christianity, as I observed now, made no scruple of using the images and pictures of their princes and learned men; which the Jews understood to be forbidden to them in the commandment. Then they admitted, even in the utensils of the church, some celatures and engravings; such was that Tertullian speaks of, "the good shepherd in the chalice." Afterwards they admitted pictures, but not before the time of Constantine; for in the council of Eliberis they were forbidden. And in succession of time, the scruples lessened with the danger, and all the way they signified their belief to be, that this commandment was only so far retained by Christ as it relied upon natural reason, or was a particular instance of the great commandment; that is, images were forbidden where they did dishonour God, or lessen his reputation, or estrange our duties, or became idols, or the direct matter of superstitious observances, charms, or senseless confidences; but they were permitted to represent the humanity of Christ, to remember saints and martyrs, to recount a story, to imprint a memory, to do honour and reputation to absent persons, and to be the instruments of a relative civility and esteem. But, in this particular, infinite care is to be taken of scandal and danger, of a forward and zealous ignorance, or of a mistaking and peevish confidence; and where a society hath such persons in it, the little good of images must not be violently retained, with the greater danger and certain offence of such persons, of whom consideration is to be had in the cure of souls. I only add this, that the first christians made no scruple of saluting the statues of their princes, and were confident it made no entrenchment upon the natural prohibition contained in this commandment; because they had observed, that exterior inclinations and addresses of the body, though in the lowest manner, were not proper to God, but in Scripture found also to be communicated to creatures, to kings, to prophets, to parents, to religious persons:[x] and because they found it to be death to do affront to the pictures and statues of their emperors, they concluded in reason, (which they also saw verified by the practice and opinion of all the world,) that the respect they did at the emperor's statue was accepted as a veneration to his person. But these things are but sparingly to be drawn into religion, because the customs of this world are altered, and their opinions new; and many, who have not weak understandings, have weak consciences; and the necessity for the entertainment of them is not so great as the offence is, or may be.

The Third Commandment.

18. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."[y] This our blessed Saviour repeating, expresses it thus: "It hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself;" to which Christ adds, out of Num. xxx. 2. "But thou shalt perform thy oaths unto the Lord." The meaning of the one we are taught by the other. We must not invocate the name of God in any promise in vain, that is, with a lie: which happens either out of levity, that we change our purpose, which at first we really intended; or when our intention at that instant was fallacious, and contradictory to the undertaking. This is to "take the name of God," that is, to use it, to take it into our mouths, for vanity; that is, according to the perpetual style of Scripture, for a lie. "Every one hath spoken vanity to his neighbour,"[z] that is, hath lied unto him; for so it follows, "with flattering lips, and with a double heart;" and "swearing deceitfully" is by the Psalmist called "lifting up his soul unto vanity."[a] And Philo the Jew,[b] who well understood the law and the language of his nation, renders the

[u] Τὸν ἀδρατον εἰκονογραφεῖν ἡ διαπλάσσειν οὐχ ὅσιον.—PHILO de Legatione.

Prioribus 170 annis templa quidem ædificabant [Romani], simulacrum verò nullum effigiatum faciebant; perindè atque nefas esset meliora per deteriorum similitudines exprimere. —PLUTARCH. Numa.

Εἰη γάρ ἐν τοῦτο μόνος θεὸς, περιέχον ἡμᾶς ἅπαντας καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὁ καλοῦμεν οὐρανὸν, καὶ κόσμον, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀντῶν φύσιν. τούτου δὴ τίς ἂν εἰκόνα πλάττειν θαρρήσειε, νοῦν ἔχων, ὁμοίαν τινὶ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν; ἀλλ, ἐᾶν δεῖ πᾶσαν ξοανοποιίαν, τίμενος ἀφορίσαντας, καὶ σιηκὸν ἀξιόλογον τιμᾶν εἴδους χωρίς.—STRAB. lib. xvi.

Ὄφθαλμοὶς οὐχ ὁρᾶται, οὐδένι ἔοικεν· διόπερ ἀυτὸν οὐδεὶς ἐκμαθεῖν ἐξ εἰκόνος δύναται. ANTISTH.

[x] Gen. xxiii. 12. xxvii. 29. xlii. 6. and xlviii. 12. 1 Sam. xx. 41. 1 Kings i. 16.

[y] Apud Romanos sancitum est, ut si per Deum jurans quis pejeraret, ad Deum ipsum plectendus remitteretur, quem satis esse idoneum suæ majestatis vindicem dicebant.—L. Jurisjurandi, C. de Rebus Credit. et Jurejur.

Sin per genium principis quis jurans pejerâsset, castigabatur fustibus, cum hoc elogio, Temerè ne jura.—Si duo Patroni, Sect. fin. de Jurejur.

Lysander dixit homines uti posse pro suo commodo juramentis, sicut pueri astragalis.—PLUTARCH. in Lysand.

Idem in Æmylio ait, Macedonas usos esse juramento uti monetâ.

[z] Psalm xii. 2.

[a] Psalm xxiv. 4.

[b] Οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ· μάρτυρα δὲ καὶ καλεῖν ἐπὶ ψεύδει θεὸν ἀνοσιώτατον.—PHILO.

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sense of this commandment to be, "to call God to witness to a lie." And this is to be understood only in promises, for so Christ explains it, by the appendix out of the law, "Thou shalt perform thy oaths:" for lying in judgment, which is also with an oath, or taking God's name for witness, is forbidden in the ninth commandment. To this Christ added a further restraint. For whereas, by the natural law, it was not unlawful to swear by any oath that implied not idolatry, or the belief of a false god, (I say,) any grave and prudent oath, when they spake a grave truth; and whereas it was lawful for the Jews in ordinary intercourse to swear by God, so they did not swear to a lie, (to which also swearing to an impertinency might be reduced by a proportion of reason, and was so accounted of in the practice of the Jews,) but else, and in other cases, they used to swear by God, or by a creature, respectively; for, "they that swear by him shall be commended," saith the Psalmist;[c] and "swearing to the Lord of hosts," is called "speaking the language of Canaan."[d] Most of this was rescinded; Christ forbade "all swearing," not only swearing to a lie, but also swearing to a truth in common affairs; not only swearing commonly by the name of God, but swearing commonly "by heaven," and "by the earth, by our head," or by any other oath: only let our speech be yea, or nay; that is, plainly affirming or denying.[e] In these, I say, Christ corrected the license and vanities of the Jews and gentiles. For as the Jews accounted it religion to name God, and therefore would not swear by him, but in the more solemn occasions of their life; but in trifles they would swear by their fathers, or the light of heaven, or the ground they trod on: so the Greeks were also careful not to swear by the gods lightly, much less fallaciously; but they would swear by any thing about them, or near them, upon an occasion as vain as their oath.[f] But because these oaths are either indirectly to be referred to God, (and Christ instances in divers,) or else they are but a vain testimony, or else they give a divine honour to a creature, by making it a judge of truth and discerner of spirits; therefore Christ seems to forbid all forms of swearing whatsoever. In pursuance of which law, Basilides, being converted at the prayers of Potamiæna, a virgin-martyr, and required by his fellow-soldiers to swear upon some occasion then happening, answered, it was not lawful for him to swear, for he was a christian; and many of the fathers have followed the words of Christ in so severe a sense, that their words seem to admit no exception.

19. But here a grain of salt must be taken, lest the letter destroy the spirit. First, it is certain the holy Jesus forbade a custom of swearing;[g] it being great irreligion to despise and lessen the name of God, which is the instrument and conveyance of our adorations to him, by making it common and applicable to trifles and ordinary accidents of our life. He that swears often, many times swears false, and, however, lays by that reverence which, being due to God, the Scripture determines it to be due to his name: his "name is to be loved and feared." And therefore Christ commands that our "communication be yea, yea," or "nay, nay;" that is, our ordinary discourses should be simply affirmative or negative. In order to this, Plutarch[h] affirms out of Phavorinus, that the reason why the Greeks forbade children, who were about to swear by Hercules, to swear within doors, was, that by this delay and preparation, they might be taught not to be hasty or quick in swearing, but all such invocations should be restrained and retarded by ceremony: and Hercules himself was observed never to have sworn in all his lifetime but once. 2. Not only customary swearing is forbidden, but all swearing upon a slight cause. St. Basil upbraids some christians, his contemporaries, with the example of Clinias the Pythagorean, who, rather than he would swear, suffered a mulct of three talents. And all the followers of Pythagoras admitted no oath, unless the matter were grave, necessary, and charitable: and the wisest and gravest persons among the heathens were very severe in their counsels concerning oaths. 3. But there are some cases in which the interests of kingdoms and bodies politic, peace and confederacies, require the sanction of promissory oaths; and they whom we are bound to obey, and who may kill us if we do not, require that their interests be secured by an oath: and that in this case, and all that are equal, our blessed Saviour did not forbid oaths, is certain, not only by the example of christians, but of all the world before and since this prohibition, understanding it to be of the nature of such natural bands and securities, without which, commonwealths, in some cases, are not easily combined, and therefore to be a thing necessary, and therefore not to be forbidden. Now what is by christians to be esteemed a slight cause, we may determine by the account we take of other things. The glory of God is certainly no light matter; and therefore, when that is evidently and certainly concerned, not fantastically, and by vain and imaginary consequences, but by prudent and true estimation, then we may lawfully swear. We have St. Paul's example, who well understood the precept of his Master, and is not to be supposed easily to have done any violence to it; but yet we find religious affirmations, and God invoked for "witness as a record upon his soul," in his epistles to the Romans,

[c] Psalm lxiii. 11. [d] 1 Sam. xx. 17. Isa. xix. 18.

[e] Ἁπλᾶ γὰρ ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας ἔπη.—ÆSCHYL. Ὄπλων κρίσις.

[f] Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa Tonantis. Non credo, jura, Verpe, per Anchialum, id est, per Elohim Hebræorum.—MART. lib. xi. Ep. 95.

Vide Harmenopulum in Plin. lib. v. c. 27. et Scalig. de Emend. Temp. in Append. Libror.

Μὴ προστετῶς κατὰ τῶν θεῶν ὀμνύειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τῶν προστυγχανόντων.—Interp. in Hom. EUSEB. lib. vi. Hist. cap. 4.

[g] Vide Ecclus. xxiii. 9, 11, 13.

Dominus et Jacobus ideo prohibuerunt jusjurandum, non ut illud prorsus è rebus humanis tollerent, sed quia caveremus à perjurio non facilè jurando.—S. AUGUST. Ser. 28. de Verbis Apost.

[h] Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἐπίσχεσίς ἐστι τῆς πρὸς τὸν ὅρκον εὐχερείας καὶ ταχύτητος τὸ γινόμενον. ὡς Φαβωρῖνος ἔλεγε· τὸ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐκ παρασκευῆς μέλλησιν ἐμποιεῖ, καὶ βουλεύσασθαι δίδωσι.

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Galatians, and Corinthians.[i] But these oaths were only assertory. Tertullian affirmeth, that christians refused to swear by the genius of their prince, because it was a demon; but they sware by his health, and their solemn oath was by God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the majesty of the emperor. The fathers of the Ephesine council made Nestorius and Victor swear; and the bishops at Chalcedon sware by the health of their princes. But as St. Paul did it extra-judicially, when the glory of God was concerned in it, and the interest of souls; so the christians used to swear in a cause of piety and religion, in obedience, and upon public command, or for the ends of charity and justice, both with oaths promissory and assertory, as the matter required: with this only difference, that they never did swear in the causes of justice or charity, but when they were before a magistrate; but if it were in a cause of religion, and in matters of promise, they did indeed swear among themselves, but always to or in communities and societies, obliging themselves by oath not to commit wickedness, robberies, sacrilege, not to deceive their trust, not to detain the pledge; which rather was an act of direct intercourse with God, than a solemn or religious obligation to man. Which very thing Pliny also reports of the christians.

20. The sum is this:[k] Since the whole subject matter of this precept is oaths promissory, or vows, all promises with oaths are regularly forbidden to christians, unless they be made to God or God's vicegerent, in a matter not trifling. For, in the first case, a promise made to God, and a swearing by God to perform the promise, to him is all one; for the name of God being the instrument and determination of all our addresses, we cannot be supposed to speak to God without using of his name explicitly, or by implication: and therefore he that promises to God, makes a promise, and uses God's name in the promise; the promise itself being in the nature of a prayer, or solemn invocation of God. In the second case, when the public necessity requires it, of which we are not judges, but are under authority, we find the lawfulness by being bound to believe, or not to contradict, the pretence of its necessity; only care is to be taken that the matter be grave or religious, that is, it is to be esteemed and presumed so by us, if the oath be imposed by our lawful superiors, and to be cared for by them: or else it is so to be provided for by ourselves, when our intercourse is with God, as in vows and promises passed to God; being careful that we do not offer to God goat's hair, or the fumes of mushrooms, or the blood of swine; that is, things either impious or vain. But in our communication, that is, in our ordinary intercourse with men, we must promise by simple testimony, not by religious adjurations, though a creature be the instrument of the oath.

21. But this forbids not assertory oaths at all, or deposing in judgment; for of this Christ speaks not here, it being the proper matter of another commandment: and since (as St. Paul affirms) "an oath is the end of all controversy,"[l] and that the necessity of commonwealths requires that a period should be fixed to questions, and a rule for the nearest certainty for judgment; whatsoever is necessary is not unlawful; and Christ, who came to knit the bonds of government faster by the stricture of more religious ties, cannot be understood to have given precepts to dissolve the instruments of judicature and prudent government. But concerning assertory oaths, although they are not forbidden, but supposed in the ninth commandment to be done before our judges in the cause of our neighbour; yet because they are only so supposed, and no way else mentioned, by permission or intimation, therefore they are to be estimated by the proportions of this precept concerning promissory oaths: they may be taken in judgment and righteousness, but never lightly, never extra-judicially; only a less cause, so it be judicial, may authorize an assertory than a promissory oath; because many cases occur, in which peace and justice may be concerned, which without an oath are indeterminable, but there are but few necessities to confirm a promise by an oath. And therefore the reverence of the name of God ought not to be intrenched upon in accidents of little or no necessity; God, not having made many necessities in this case, would not, in the matter of promise, give leave to use his name but when an extraordinary case happens. An oath in promises is of no use for ending questions and giving judicial sentences; and the faith of a christian, and the word of a just person, will do most of the work of promises: and it is very much to the disreputation of our religion or ourselves, if we fall into hypocrisy or deceit, or if a christian asseveration were not of value equal with an oath. And therefore Christ forbidding promissory oaths, and commanding so great simplicity of spirit and honesty, did consonantly to the design and perfection of his institution, intending to make us so just and sincere, that our religion being infinite obligation to us, our own promises should pass for bond enough to others, and the religion receive great honour, by being esteemed a sufficient security and instrument of public intercourse.[m] And this was intimated by our Lord himself, in that reason he is pleased to give of the prohibition of swearing: "Let your communication be Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more, cometh of evil:"[n] that is,

[i] Rom. i. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. i. 20.

[k] Τὸ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ συλλαβαι δύο· ἀλλ' ὅμως τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἡ ἀλήθεια, καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος ὅρος τῆς πονηρίας, τὸ ψεῦδος, τοῖς μικροῖς ῥήμασι πολλάκις ἐμπεριέχεται.—S. BASIL. lib. de Spir. S.

Necessitas magnum humanæ imbecilitatis præsidium; quicquid cogit, excusat.—SEN.

[l] Heb. vi. 16.

[m] Μὴ ὀμνύναι θεούς ἀσκεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν δεῖν ἀξιόπιστον παρέχειν.—HIEROCL.

Vide Marc. Anton. in Descriptione Viri Boni, lib. iii. μήτε ὅρκον δεόμενος· Τῶν δικαίων ναί ἐστι ναί, καὶ οὐ ἐστιν οὔ, tritum est; ita scil. ut facta dictis respondere justorum sit.

Κάλλιστον, καὶ βιοφιλέστατον, καὶ ἁρμοστὸν τῇ λογικῇ φύσει τὸ ἀνώμοτον, οὕτως ἀληθεύειν ἐφ' ἑκάστοτε δεδιδαγμένη, ὡς λόγους ὅρκους εἶναι νομίζεσθαι—PHILO.

Verbum sacerdotis apud Christianæ ecclesiæ ministros etiam hodie manet loco juramenti. Ad eundem sensum apud antiquos fuerunt verba illa prætoris ex edicto perpetuo, "Sacerdotem Vestalem et flaminem dialem in omni mea jurisdictione jurare non cogam."—A. GELL. lib. x. c. 15.

[n] Matt. v. 37.

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as good laws come from ill manners, the modesty of clothing from the shame of sin, antidotes and physic by occasion of poisons and diseases; so is swearing an affect of distrust, and want of faith or honesty, on one or both sides. Men dare not trust the word of a christian, or a christian is not just and punctual to his promises, and this calls for confirmation by an oath. So that oaths suppose a fault, though they are not faults always themselves; whatsoever is more than yea or nay, is not always evil, but it always cometh of evil. And, therefore, the Essenes esteemed every man that was put to his oath no better than an infamous person, a perjurer, or at least suspected, not esteemed a just man: and the heathens would not suffer the priest of Jupiter to swear, because all men had great opinion of his sanctity and authority: and the Scythians derided Alexander's caution and timorous provision, when he required an oath of them: "Nos religionem in ipsa fide novimus,[o] Our faith is our bond:" and they who are willing to deceive men will not stick to deceive God, when they have called God to witness.[p] But I have a caution to insert for each, which I propound as an humble advice to persons eminent and publickly interested.

22. First: That princes, and such as have power of decreeing the injunction of promissory oaths, be very curious and reserved, not lightly enjoining such promises, neither in respect of the matter trivial, nor yet frequently,[q] nor without great reason enforcing. The matter of such promises must be only what is already matter of duty or religion; for else the matter is not grave enough for the calling of God to testimony: but when it is a matter of duty, then the oath is no other than a vow, or promise, made to God in the presence of men. And because christians are otherwise very much obliged to do all which is their duty, in matters both civil and religious, of obedience and piety; therefore it must be an instant necessity, and a great cause, to superinduce such a confirmation as derives from the so sacredly invocating the name of God; it must be when there is great necessity that the duty be actually performed, and when the supreme power either hath not power sufficient to punish the delinquent, or may miss to have notice of the delict. For in these cases it is reasonable to bind the faith of the obliged persons by the fear of God after a more special manner; but else there is no reason sufficient to demand of the subject any further security than their own faith and contract. The reason of this advice relies upon the strictness of the words of this precept against promissory oaths, and the reverence we owe to the name of God. Oaths of allegiance are fit to be imposed in a troubled state, or to a mutinous people; but it is not so fit to tie the people by oath, to abstain from transportations of metal, or grain, or leather, from which, by penalties, they are with as much security, and less suspicion of iniquity, restrained.

23. Secondly: Concerning assertory oaths and depositions in judgment, although a greater liberty may be taken in the subject matter of the oath, and we may, being required to it, swear in judgment, though the cause be a question of money, or our interest, or the rights of a society; and St. Athanasius purged himself by oath before the emperor Constantius: yet it were a great pursuance and security of this part of christian religion, if, in no case, contrary oaths might be admitted, in which, it is certain, one part is perjured to the ruin of their souls, to the intricating of the judgment, to the dishonour of religion;[r] but that such rules of prudence and reasonable presumption be established, that upon the oath of that party which the law shall choose, and, upon probable grounds, shall presume for, the sentence may be established. For, by a small probability, there may a surer judgment be given, than upon the confidence of contradictory oaths; and after the sin the judge is left to the uncertainty of conjectures as much as if but one part had sworn; and to much more, because such an oath is, by the consent of all men, accepted as a rule to determine in judgment. By these discourses we understand the intention of our blessed Master in this precept: and I wish by this, or any thing else, men would be restrained from that low, cheap, unreasonable, and inexcusable vice of customary swearing, to which we have nothing to invite us that may lessen the iniquity, for which we cannot pretend temptation, nor allege infirmity, but it begins by recklessness and a malicious carelessness, and is continued by the strength of habit, and the greatest immensity of folly. And I consider that christian religion, being so holy an institution, to which we are invited by so great promises, in which we are instructed by so clear revelations, and to the performance of our duties compelled by the threatenings of a sad and unprofitable eternity, should more than sufficiently endear the performance of this duty to us. The name of a christian is a high and potent antidote against all sin, if we consider aright the honour of the name, the undertaking of our covenant, and the reward of our duty. The Jews eat no swine's flesh, because they are of Moses, and the Turks drink no wine, because they are Mahometans; and yet we swear, for all we are christians, than which there is not in the world a greater conviction of our baseness and irreligion. Is the authority of the holy Jesus so despicable? are his laws so unreasonable, his rewards so little, his threatenings so small, that we must needs, in contempt of all this, profane the great name of God, and trample under foot the laws of Jesus, and cast away the hopes of heaven, and enter into security to be possessed by hell-torments for swearing, that is, for speaking like a fool, without reason, without pleasure, without reputation, much to our disesteem, much to the trouble of civil and wise persons with whom we join in society and intercourse? Cer-

[o] Curtius, lib. vii.

[p] Qui non reverentur homines, fallent Deos.—CICERO pro Roscio.

[q] Οὐ γὰρ πίστεως τεκμήριον πολυορκία, ἀλλὰ ἀπιστίας ἐστὶ, παρὰ τοῖς εὐφρονοῦσι.—PHILO in Decal.

[r] Ἀλλ' οἷπερ πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὅρκια δηλήσαντο
——— τέρσενα χρόα γῦπες ἔδονται.—HOM. Iliad. lib. iv.

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tainly hell will be heated seven times hotter for a customary swearer, and every degree of his unreasonableness will give him a new degree of torment, when he shall find himself in flames for being a stupid, an atheistical, an irreligious fool. This only I desire should be observed, that our blessed Master forbids not only swearing by God, but by any creature; for every oath by a creature does involve and tacitly relate to God. And therefore, saith Christ, "Swear not by heaven, for it is the throne of God;"[s] and he that sweareth by the throne of God, "sweareth by it, and by him that sitteth thereon." So that it is not a less matter to swear by a creature than to swear by God; for a creature cannot be the instrument of testimony, but as it is a relative to God; and it, by implication, calls the God of that creature to witness. So that although, in such cases in which it is permitted to swear by God, we may, in those cases, express our oath in the form of advocating and calling the creature; (as did the primitive christians swearing by the health of their emperor, and as Joseph swearing by the life of Pharaoh, and as Elisha swearing by the life of Elias,[t] and as did St. Paul, protesting "by the rejoicing he had in Jesus Christ,"[u] and as we, in our forms of swearing in courts of judicature, touch the Gospels, saying, So help me God, and the contents of this book;" and in a few ages lately past, bishops and priests sometimes swore upon the cross, sometimes upon the altar, sometimes by their holy order;) yet we must remember that this, in other words and ceremonies, is but a calling God for witness; and he that swears by the cross, swears by the holy crucifix, that is, Jesus crucified thereon. And these, and the like forms, are, therefore, not to be used in ordinary communication, because they relate to God; they are as obligatory as the immediate invocation of his holiness and majesty; and it was a Judaical vanity to think swearing by creatures was less obliging:[x] they are just with the same restraints made to be religious as the most solemn invocation of the holy and reverend name of God, lawful or unlawful as the other: unless the swearing by a creature come to be spoiled by some other intervening circumstance, that is, with a denying it to relate to God; for then it becomes superstition as well as profanation, and it gives to a creature what is proper to God; or when the creature is contemptible, or less than the gravity of the matter, as if a man should swear by a fly, or the shadow of a tree; or when there is an indecorum in the thing, or something that does, at too great distance, relate to God: for that which, with greatest vicinity, refers to God in several religions, is the best instrument of an oath, and nearest to God's honour; as in christianity are the holy sacrament, the cross, the altar, and the Gospels; and, therefore, too great a distance may be an indecency next to a disparagement. This only may be added to this consideration; that although an oath, which is properly calling God or God's relative into testimony, is to be understood according to the former discourse; yet there may be great affirmations or negations respectively, and confirmed by forms of vehement asseveration, such as the customs of a nation or consent shall agree upon: and those do, in some cases, promote our belief, or confirm our pretensions, better than a plain yea or no; because, by such consent, the person renders himself infamous if he breaks his word or trust. And although this will not come under the restraint of Christ's words, because they are not properly oaths, but circumstances of earnest affirmation or negation; yet these are human attestations, introduced by custom or consent; and as they come not under the notion of swearing, so they are forms of testimony and collateral engagement of a more strict truth.

The Fourth Commandment.

24. The holy Jesus having specified the great commandment of "loving God with all our heart," in this one instance of hallowing and keeping his name sacred, that is, from profane and common talk, and less prudent and unnecessary intercourses, instanced in no other commandment of Moses: but having frequent occasion to speak of the sabbath, for ever expresses his own dominion over the day, and that he had dissolved the bands of Moses in this instance; that now we were no more obliged to that rest which the Jews religiously observed by prescript of the law;[y] and by divers acts against securities of the then received practices, did desecrate the day, making it a broken yoke, and the first great instance of christian liberty. And when the apostle gave instructions that "no man should judge his brother in a holy day, or new moons, or the sabbath-days,"[z] he declared all the Judaical feasts to be obliterated by the sponge which Jesus tasted on the cross; it was within the manuscript of ordinances, and there it was cancelled. And there was nothing moral in it, but that we do honour to God for the creation, and to that, and all other purposes of religion, separate and hallow some portion of our time. The primitive church kept both the sabbath and the Lord's day till the time of the Laodicean council, about three hundred years after Christ's nativity, and almost in every thing made them equal; and, therefore, did not esteem the Lord's day to be substituted in the place of the obliterated sabbath, but a feast celebrated by great reason and perpetual

[s] Ὀμνυμι δ' ἱερὸν αἰθέρ', οἴκησιν Διός.—SOPHOC. Menal. Qui per salutem suam jurat, Deum jurare videtur; respectu enim divini numinis jurat.—ULPIAN. J. C. Concil. Chalc. c. 25.

[t] 2 Kings ii. 2. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 31. Vide suprà, num. 19.

[x] Per tua jurares sacra, tuumque caput.—MART. Deut. xxx. 19. Isa. i. 2. Micah i. 2. S. August. Epist. ad Publicolam; et lib. li. Duo Patroni, Sect. Si quis juraverit; et lib. Non erit, D. de Jurejurando. Tertul. ad Scap.

Testor, chara, deos—teque, tuumque
Dulce caput, magicas invitam accingier artes.
VIRGIL. lib. iv. Æneid.

Perque suos illam quondam jurâsse recordor,
Perque meos oculos; et doluere mei.
OVID.

[y] Καὶ μετὰ τὸ σαββατίσαι ἑορταζέτω ὁ φιλόχριστος τὴν κυριακήν. Ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἑορτὴν ἡγεῖται.—IGNAT. Ep. ad Magnes.

Diog. Clem. Apost. Constit. lib. vii. c. 24. et lib. viii. Tertul. Monog. Canon. Apost. 65. et Zonar. in eund. Vide etiam Synod. Laodic.

[z] Col. ii. 16.

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consent, without precept or necessary Divine injunction. But the liberty of the church was great: they found themselves disobliged from that strict and necessary rest which was one great part of the sabbatic rites, only they were glad of the occasion to meet often for offices of religion, and the day served well for the gaining and facilitating the conversion of the Jews, and for the honourable sepulture of the synagogue, it being kept so long, like the forty days' mourning of Israel for the death of their father Jacob; but their liberty they improved not to license, but as an occasion of more frequent assemblies. And there is something in it for us to imitate, even to sanctify the name of God in the great work of the creation, reading his praises in the book of his creatures, and taking all occasions of religious acts and offices, though in none of the Jewish circumstances.

25. Concerning the observation of the Lord's day, which now the church observes, and ever did, in remembrance of the resurrection, because it is a day of positive and ecclesiastical institution, it is fit that the church, who instituted the day, should determine the manner of its observation. It was set apart in honour of the resurrection; and it were not ill if all churches would, into the weekly offices, put some memorial of that mystery, that the reason of the festival might be remembered with the day, and God thanked with the renewing of the offices. But because religion was the design of the feast, and leisure was necessary for religion, therefore to abstain from suits of law and servile works;[a] but such works as are of necessity and charity, (which, to observe, are of themselves a very good religion,) is a necessary duty of the day;[b] and to do acts of public religion is the other part of it. So much is made matter of duty by the intervention of authority: and though the church hath made no more prescriptions in this, and God hath made none at all; yet he who keeps the day most strictly, most religiously, he keeps it best, and most consonant to the design of the church, and the ends of religion, and the opportunity of the present leisure, and the interests of his soul. The acts of religion proper for the day are prayers and public liturgies, preaching, catechizing, acts of charity, visiting sick persons, acts of eucharist to God, of hospitality to our poor neighbours, of friendliness and civility to all, reconciling differences; and after the public assemblies are dissolved, any act of direct religion to God, or of ease and remission to servants, or whatsoever else is good in manners, or in piety, or in mercy. What is said of this great feast of the christians is to be understood to have a greater severity and obligation in the anniversary of the resurrection, of the ascension, of the nativity of our blessed Saviour, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. And all days festival to the honour of God, in remembrance of the holy apostles, and martyrs, and departed saints, as they are with prudence to be chosen and retained by the church, so as not to be unnecessary, or burdensome, or useless; so they are to be observed by us, as instances of our love of the communion of saints, and our thankfulness for the blessing and the example.

The Fifth Commandment.

26. "Honour thy father and thy mother." This commandment Christ made also to be christian, by his frequent repetition and mention of it in his sermons and laws, and so ordered it, that it should be the band of civil government and society. In the decalogue God sets this precept immediately after the duties that concern himself, our duty to parents being in the confines with our duty to God, the parents being, in order of nature, next to God, the cause of our being and production, and the great almoners of eternity, conveying to us the essences of reasonable creatures, and the charities of Heaven. And when our blessed Saviour, in a sermon to the Pharisees, spake of duty to parents, he rescued it from the impediments of a vain tradition, and secured this duty, though against a pretence of religion towards God, telling us that God would not himself accept a gift which we took from our parents' needs. This duty to parents is the very firmament and band of commonwealths. He that honours his parents will also love his brethren, derived from the same loins, he will dearly account of all his relatives and persons of the same cognation;[c] and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. And because parents and patriarchs of families and of nations had regal power, they who, by any change, succeeded in the care and government of cities and kingdoms, succeeded in the power and authority of fathers, and became so, in estimate of law and true divinity, to all their people. So that the duty here commanded is due to all our

[a] Feriis jurgia amovento, easque in famulis operibus patratis habento.—CICER. de Leg. lib. ii.

[b] Quippe etiam festis quædam exercere diebus
Fas et jura sinunt; rivos deducere nulla
Religio vetuit, segeti prætendere sepem,
Insidias avibus moliri, incendere vepres,
Balantûmque gregem fluvio mersare salubri.
VIRGIL. apud Macrob.

De ferocia Tiberii dedit testimonium Tacit. lib. iii. Annal. his verbis: Quemne diem vacuum pœna? ubi inter sacra et vota, quo tempore verbis etiam profanis abstinere mos esset, vincula et laqueus inducantur?

Ἑορτὴ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστιν ἢ τὰ δέοντα πράττειν.—THUCYD. lib. i.

Ἕκαστος ὑμῶν σαββατιζέτω πνευματικῶς, μελέτην νόμου χαίρων, οὐ σώματος ἄνεσει, δημιουργίαν Θεοῦ θαυμάζων, οὐχ ἑωλα ἐσθίων, καὶ χλιαρὰ πίνων, καὶ μεμετρημένα βαδίζων, καὶ ὀρχήσει καὶ κρότοις νοῦν οὐκ ἔχουσι χαίρων.—S. IGNAT. Ep. ad Magnes.

Judæi serviliter observant diem sabbati, ad luxuriam, ad ebrietatem. Quanto meliùs fœminæ eorum lanam facerent, quàm illo die in Menianis saltarent?—S. AUGUST. Tract. 4. in Joan. Et in Psal. xcii. idem ferè.

[c] Ὁ λοιδορῶν τὸν πατέρα δυσφημεῖ λόγῳ·
Τὴν εἰς τὸ θεῖον δὲ μέλιστα βλασφημίαν.—MENAND.

Ἐμφανεῖς Θεοὶ, μιμούμενοι τὸν ἀγέννητον ἐν τῷ ζωοπλαστεῖν.—De Parentibus dixit Philo ad Decal.

Vivet extento Proculeius ævo,
Notus in fratres animi paterni:
Illum aget pennâ metuente solvi
Fama superstes.—HOR. lib. ii. Od. 2.

Τοὺς τε γονεῖς τίμα, τοὺς τ' ἄγχιστ' ἀγεγαῶτας.—HIEROCL.

Cùm tibi sint fratres, fratres ulciscere lesos:
Cùmque pater tibi sit, jura tuere patris.
Necessaria præsidia vitæ debentur his maximè.
CICER. Offic. 3.

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fathers in the sense of Scripture and laws, not only to our natural, but to our civil fathers, that is, to kings and governors. And the Scripture adds, mothers; for they also, being instruments of the blessing, are the objects of the duty. The duty is, "honour;" that is, reverence, and support, if they shall need it. And that which our blessed Saviour calls, "not honouring our parents,"[d] in St. Matthew, is called in St. Mark, "doing nothing for them;"[e] and honour is expounded by St. Paul,[f] to be "maintenance," as well as "reverence." Then we honour our parents, if with great readiness we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sicknesses, and supply their wants, and, as much as lies in us, give them support, who gave us being.

The Sixth Commandment.

27. "Thou shalt do no murder."[g] So it was said to them of old time. He that kills shall be guilty of judgment; that is, he is to die by the sentence of the judge. To this Christ makes an appendix: "But I say unto you, he that is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." This addition of our blessed Saviour, as all the other, which are severer explications of the law than the Jews admitted, was directed against the vain and imperfect opinion of the lawyers, who thought to be justified by their external works; supposing, if they were innocent in matter of fact, God would require no more of them than man did; and what, by custom or silence of the laws, was not punishable by the judge, was harmless before God; and this made them to trust in the letter, to neglect the duties of repentance, to omit asking pardon for their secret irregularities, and the obliquities and aversations of their spirits; and this St. Paul also complains of, that, neglecting "the righteousness of God, they sought to establish their own,"[h] that is, according to man's judgment. But our blessed Saviour tells them, that such an innocence is not enough; God requires more than conformity, and observation of the fact, and exterior piety, placing justice not in legal innocency, or not being condemned in judgment of the law and human judicature, but in the righteousness of the spirit also: for the first acquits us before man, but by this we shall be held upright in judgment before the Judge of all the world. And therefore, besides abstinence from murder or actual wounds, Christ forbids all "anger without cause against our brother," that is, against any man.

28. By which not the first motions are forbidden; the twinklings of the eye, as the philosophers call them, the propassions and sudden and irresistible alterations; for it is impossible to prevent them, unless we could give ourselves a new nature,[i] any more than we can refuse to wink with our eye when a sudden blow is offered at it; or refuse to yawn when we see a yawning sleepy person: but by frequent and habitual mortification, and by continual watchfulness, and standing in readiness against all inadvertencies, we shall lessen the inclination, and account fewer sudden irreptions. A wise and meek person should not kindle at all, but after violent and great collision; and then, if like a flint he sends a spark out, it must as soon be extinguished as it shows, and cool as soon as sparkle. But, however, the sin is not in the natural disposition. But when we entertain it, though it be, as Seneca expresses it, "cum voluntate non contumaci,"[k] without a determination of revenge, then it begins to be a sin. Every indignation against the person of the man, in us is pride and self-love; and towards others ungentleness, and an immorigerous spirit. Which is to be understood, when the cause is not sufficient, or when the anger continues longer, or is excessive in the degrees of its proportion.

29. The causes of allowable anger are, when we see God dishonoured, or a sin committed, or any irregularity, or fault in matter of government; a fault against the laws of a family or good manners, disobedience or stubbornness: which, in all instances where they may be prudently judged such by the governor, yet possibly they are not all direct sins against God and religion. In such cases we may "be angry." But then we may also sin, if we exceed in time, or measure of degree.

30. The proportion of time St. Paul expresses, by "not letting the sun set upon our anger." Leontius Patricius[l] was one day extremely and unreasonably angry with John, the patriarch of Alexandria; at evening, the patriarch sent a servant to him with this message: "Sir, the sun is set." Upon which Patricius reflecting, and the grace of God making the impression deep, visible, and permanent, he threw away his anger, and became wholly subject to the counsel and ghostly aids of the patriarch. This limit St. Paul borrowed from the Psalmist; for that which in the fourth Psalm, verse 4, we read, "Stand in awe, and sin not," the Septuagint reads, "Be angry, but sin not." And this measure is taken from the analogy of the law of the Jews, that a malefactor should not hang upon the accursed tree after the sun was set: and if the laws laid down their just anger against malefactors as soon as the sun descended and took off his beams from beholding the example; much more is it reasonable that a private anger, which is not warranted by authority, not measured by laws, not examined by solemnities of justice, not made reasonable by considering the degree of the causes, not made charitable by intending the public good, not secured from injuriousness by being disinterested, and such an anger in which the party is judge, and witness, and executioner; it is (I say) but reason such an anger should unyoke, and go to bed with the sun, since justice and authority laid by the rods and axes

[d] Matt. xv. 6. [e] Mark vii. 12.
[f] 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.
Γονέας τιμήσωμεν ὑπερβαλλόντως, σώματος ὑπηρεσίαν καὶ χρημάτων χορηγίαν αὐτοῖς ὑπέχοντες ὅτι μάλιστα προθυμοτάτην.—HIEROCL.
Φέρει δ' ἐπὶ τὴν ἐπιμυθίαν αὐτοὺς, καὶ τὸ τῶν δουλικωτέρων ὑπηρετημάτων ἄπτεσθαι ποτὲ τοὺς παῖδας, ὅστε καὶ πόδας ἀπονίψαι.—HIEROCL. apud Stobæum.
[g] Lev. xxiv. 21. Num. xxxv. 16, 17. [h] Rom. x. 3.
[i] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Demetriad.
[k] Seneca, lib. ii. de Ira, c. 4.
[l] Leontius Cypr. Episc. in Vita ipsius, c. 14.

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as soon as the sun unteamed his chariot. Plutarch reports, that the Pythagoreans were strict observers of the very letter of this caution;[m] for if anger had boiled up to the height of injury or reproach, before sunset they would shake hands, salute each other, and depart friends; for they were ashamed that the same anger, which had disturbed the counsels of the day, should also trouble the quiet and dreams of the night, lest anger, by mingling with their rest and nightly fancies, should grow natural and habitual. Well, anger must last no longer; but neither may a christian's anger last so long; for if his anger last a whole day, it will certainly, before night, sour into a crime. A man's anger is like the spleen; at the first it is natural, but in its excess and distemper it swells into a disease; and, therefore, although to be angry at the presence of certain objects is natural, and therefore is indifferent, because he that is an essential enemy to sin never made sin essential to a man; yet, unless it be also transient, and pass off at the command of reason and religion, it quickly becomes criminal. The meaning is, that it be no more but a transient passion, not permanent at all; but that the anger against the man pass into indignation against the crime, and pity of the person, till the pity grows up into endeavours to help him. For an angry, violent, and disturbed man, is like that white bramble of Judea, of which Josephus reports, that it is set on fire by impetuous winds, and consumes itself, and burns the neighbour-plants. And the evil effects[n] of a violent and passionate anger are so great, so dangerous, so known to all the world, that the very consideration of them is the best argument in the world to dispute against it; families and kingdoms have suffered horrid calamities; and whatsoever is violent in art or nature, hath been made the instrument of sadness, in the hands of anger.

31. The measure of the degree is to be estimated by human prudence, that it exceed not the value of the cause, nor the proportion of other circumstances, and that it cause no eruption into indiscretions or indecencies. For, therefore, Moses's anger, though for God and religion, was reproved, because it went forth into a violent and troubled expression, and showed the degree to be inordinate. For it is in this passion as in lightning, which if it only breaks the cloud and makes a noise, shows a tempest and disturbance in nature, but the hurt is none; but if it seizes upon a man, or dwells upon a house, or breaks a tree, it becomes a judgment and a curse. And as the one is a mischief in chance and accident, so the other is in morality and choice: if it passes from passion into action, from a transient violence to a permanent injury, if it abides, it scorches the garment or burns the body; and there is no way to make it innocent, but to remove and extinguish it; and, while it remains, to tie the hands, and pare the nails, and muzzle it, that it may neither scratch, nor bite, nor talk. An anger in God's cause may become unhallowed, if it sees the sun rise and set: and an anger in the cause of a man is innocent, according to the degrees of its suddenness and discontinuance; for, by its quickness and volatile motion it shows, that it was, 1. unavoidable in its production; or, 2. that it was harmless in the event; or, 3. quickly suppressed: according to which several cases, anger is either, 1. natural; or, 2. excusable; or, 3. the matter of a virtue.

32. The vulgar Latin Bible, in this precept of our blessed Saviour, reads not the appendix, "without a cause," but indefinitely, "he that is angry with his brother;" and St. Jerome affirms, that the clause, "without a cause," is not to be found in the true Greek copies: upon supposition of which, because it is not to be imagined that all anger, in all causes and in all degrees, is simply unlawful; and St. Paul distinguishes being angry from committing a sin, "Be angry, but sin not;" these words are left to signify such an anger as is the crime of homicide in the heart, like the secret lusting called by Christ "adultery in the heart;" and so here is forbidden, not only the outward act, but the inward inclinations to murder, that is, an anger[o] with deliberation and purpose of revenge; this being explicative and additional to the precept forbidding murder: which also our blessed Saviour seems to have intended, by threatening the same penalty to this anger or spiritual homicide which the law inflicted upon the actual and external; that is, judgment or condemnation. And because this prohibition of anger is an explication and more severe commentary upon the sixth commandment, it is more than probable that this anger, to which condemnation is threatened, is such an anger as hath entertained something of mischief in the spirit. And this agrees well enough with the former interpretation, save that it affirms no degree of anger to be criminal, as to the height of condemnation, unless it be with a thought of violence or desires of revenge; the other degrees receiving their heightenings and declensions, as they keep their distance or approach to this. And besides, by not limiting or giving caution concerning the cause, it restrains the malice only, or the degree; but it permits other causes of anger to be innocent besides those spiritual and moral, of the interests of God's glory and religion. But this is also true, whichsoever of the readings be retained. For the irascible faculty, having in nature an object proper to its constitution and natural design, if our anger be commenced upon an object naturally troublesome, the anger is very natural, and no where said to be irregular. And he who is angry with a servant's unwariness or inadvertency, or the remissness of a child's spirit and application to his studies, or on any sudden displeasure, is not in any sense guilty of pre-

[m] Εἴ ποτε προαχθεῖεν εἰς λοιδορίαν ὑπ' ὀργῆς, πρὶν ἢ τὸν ἥλιον δῦναι, τὰς δεξιὰς ἐμβάλλοντες ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι διελύοντο.—PLUTARCH.

[n] Ira Thyesten exitio gravi
Stravere, et altis urbibus ultimæ
Stetere causæ cur perirent
Funditus, imprimeretque muris
Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens.
HORAT. lib. i. Od. 16.

[o] Καὶ πάσῃ ὀργῇ ἐπεσθαί τίνα ἡδονὴν τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ τιμωρήσασθαι.—ARIST. 2. Rhet.

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varicating the sixth commandment, unless, besides the object, he adds an inequality of degree, or unhandsome circumstance or adjunct. And, possibly, it is not in the nature of man to be strict in discipline, if the prohibitions of anger be confined only to causes of religion:[p] and it were hard that such an anger, which is innocent in all effects, and a good instrument of government, should become criminal and damnable; because some instances of displeasure are in actions not certainly and apparently sinful. So that our blessed Saviour, forbidding us to be "angry without a cause," means such causes which are not only irregularities in religion, but deflections in manners; and an anger may be religious, and political, and economical, according as it meets with objects proper to it in several kinds. It is sometimes necessary, that a man carry a tempest in his face and a rod in his hand; but for ever let him have a smooth mind, or at least under command, and within the limits of reason and religion; that he may steer securely, and avoid the rocks of sin: for then he may reprove a friend that did amiss, or chastise an offending son, or correct a vicious servant. The sum is this: There are no other bounds to hallow, or to allow and legitimate anger, but that, 1. The cause be religion, or matter of government: 2. That the degree of the anger, in prudent accounts, be no bigger than the cause: 3. That if it goes forth, it be not expressed in any action of uncharitableness, or unseasonable violence: 4. Whether it goes forth or abides at home, it must not dwell long any where; nor abide in the form of a burning coal, but at the most of a thin flame, thence passing into air salutary and gentle, fit to breathe, but not to blast. There is this only nicety to be observed: that although an anger arising for religion, or in the matter of government, cannot innocently abide long; yet it may abide till it hath passed forth into its proper and temperate expression, whether of reprehension or chastisement, and then it must sit down. But if the anger arises from another cause, (provided it be of itself innocent, not sinful in the object or cause,) the passion in its first spring is also innocent, because it is natural, and on the sudden unavoidable: but this must be suppressed within, and is not permitted to express itself at all: for in that degree in which it goes out of the mouth, or through the eyes, or from the hand, in that degree it is violent, ought to be corrected and restrained; for so that passion was intended to be turned into virtue. For this passion is like its natural parent or instrument: and if choler keeps in its proper seat, it is an instrument of digestion; but if it goes forth into the stranger regions of the body, it makes a fever: and this anger, which commences upon natural causes, though so far as it is natural it must needs be innocent, yet when any consent of the will comes to it, or that it goes forth in any action or voluntary signification, it also becomes criminal. Such an anger is only permitted to be born and die; but it must never take nourishment, or exercise any act of life.

33. But if that prohibition be indefinite, then it is certain, the analogy of the commandment, of which this is an explication, refers it to revenge or malice: it is an anger that is wrath, an anger of revenge or injury, which is here prohibited. And I add this consideration: That since it is certain, that Christ intended this for an explication of the prohibition of homicide, the clause of "without cause,"[q] seems less natural and proper. For it would intimate, that though anger of revenge is forbidden, when it is rash and unreasonable; yet that there might be a case of being angry, with a purpose of revenge and recompence, and that in such a case it is permitted to them, to whom in all other it is denied, that is, to private persons; which is against the meekness and charity of the gospel. More reasonable it is, that as no man might kill his brother, in Moses's law, by his own private authority; so an anger is here forbidden, such an anger which no qualification can permit to private persons; that is, an anger with purposes of revenge.

34. But Christ adds, that a further degree of this sin is, when our anger breaks out in contumelies and ill language, and receives its increment according to the degree and injury of the reproach. There is a homicide in the tongue, as well as in the heart; and he that kills a man's reputation[r] by calumnies, or slander, or open reviling, hath broken this commandment. But this is not to be understood so, but that persons in authority, or friends,[s] may reprehend a vicious person in language proper to his crime, or expressive of his malice or iniquity. Christ called Herod, "fox:" and although St. Michael "brought not a railing accusation" against Satan, yet the Scripture calls him "an accuser," and Christ calls him "the father of lies;" and St. Peter, "a devourer," and "a roaring lion;" and St. John call Diotrephes, "a lover of pre-eminence," or ambitious. But that which is here forbidden, is not a representing the crimes of the man for his emendation, or any other charitable or religious end, but a reviling him to do him mischief, to murder his reputation; which also shows, that whatever is here forbidden is, in some sense or other, accounted

[p] Si ira non fuerit, nec doctrina proficit, nec judicia stant, nec crimina compescuntur.—S. CHRYSOST.

Si nulla ira ex virtute surgeret, Divinæ animadversionis impetum per gladium Phinehas non placâsset.—S. GREG. lib. v. Moral.

Πιθανότατοι γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως οἱ ἐν τοῖς πάθεσιν εἶσι, καὶ κυμαίνει ὁ κυματιζόμενος, καὶ χαλεπαίνει ὀργιζόμενος, κ. τ. λ.—ARIST. Poetic.

[q] Εἰκῆ significat *in vanum*; i. e. non solùm extra causam, sed et extra modum.

[r] ——— Δεινὴν δὲ βροτῶν ὑπαλεύεο φήμην.
Φήμη γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται· κούφη μὲν ἄειραι
Ῥεῖα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ' ἀποθέσθαι.
HESIOD. Ἔργ. lib. ii.

[s] ——— Insuevit pater optimus hoc me,
Ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quæque notando:
Quum me hortaretur parcè, frugaliter, atque
Viverem uti contentus eo quod mî ipse parâsset;
Nonne vides Albi ut malè vivat filius, utque
Barrus inops? ———
——— A turpi meretricis amore
Cûm deterreret; Sectani dissimilis sis.
Ne sequerer mœchas ———
——— Deprensi non bella est fama Treboni,
Aiebat. ———
HORAT. Sat. iv. lib. i

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homicide; the anger in order to reproach, and both in order to murder, subject to the same punishment, because forbidden in the same period of the law; save only that, according to the degrees of sin, Christ proportions several degrees of punishment in the other world, which he apportions to the degrees of death which had ever been among the Jews, viz. the sword, and stoning to death, which were punishments legal and judicial; and the burning infants in the valley of Hinnom, which was a barbarous and superstitious custom used formerly by their fathers, in imitation of the Phœnician accursed rites.

35. The remedies against anger, which are prescribed by masters of spiritual life, are partly taken from rules of prudence, partly from piety, and more precise rules of religion. In prudence: 1. Do not easily entertain, or at all encourage, or willingly hear, or promptly believe, tale-bearers and reporters of other men's faults: for oftentimes we are set on fire by an *ignis fatuus*, a false flame, and an empty story. 2. Live with peaceable people, if thou canst. 3. Be not inquisitive into the misdemeanours of others, or the reports which are made of you. 4. Find out reasons of excuse, to alleviate and lessen the ignorances of a friend, or carelessnesses of a servant. 5. Observe what object is aptest to inflame thee, and, by special arts of fortification, stop up the avenues to that part. If losses, if contempt, if incivilities, if slander, still make it the greatest part of your employment to subdue the impotency of that passion that is more apt to raise tempests. 6. Extirpate petty curiosities of apparel, lodging, diet, and learn to be indifferent in circumstances; and if you be apt to be transported with such little things, do some great thing, that shall cut off their frequent intervening. 7. Do not multiply secular cares, and troublesome negociations, which have variety of conversation with several humours of men, and accidents of things; but frame to thyself a life, simple as thou canst, and free from all affectations. 8. Sweeten thy temper, and allay the violence of thy spirit, with some convenient, natural, temperate, and medicinal solaces; for some dispositions we have seen inflamed into anger, and often assaulted by peevishness, through immoderate fasting and inconvenient austerities. 9. A gentle answer is an excellent remora to the progresses of anger, whether in thyself or others. For anger is like the waves of a troubled sea; when it is corrected with a soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves nothing behind it but froth and shells; no permanent mischief.[t] 10. Silence is an excellent art: and that was the advice which St. Isaac,[u] an old religious person in the primitive church, is reported to have followed; to suppress his anger within his breast, and use what means he could there to strangle it, but never permitting it to go forth in language. Anger and lust being like fire, which if you enclose, suffering it to have no emission, it perishes and dies; but give it the smallest vent, and it rages to a consumption of all it reaches. And this advice is coincident with the general rule which is prescribed in all temptations, that anger be suppressed in its cradle and first assaults.[x] 11. Lastly: let every man be careful, that in his repentance, or in his zeal, or his religion, he be as dispassionate and free from anger as possible; lest anger pass upon him in a reflex act, which was rejected in the direct. Some mortifiers, in their contestation against anger, or any evil or troublesome principle, are like criers of assizes, who, calling for silence, make the greatest noise; they are extremely angry, when they are fighting against the habit or violent inclinations to anger.

36. But, in the way of more strict religion, it is advised, 1. That he who would cure his anger should pray often. It is St. Austin's counsel to the bishop Auxilius, that, like the apostles in a storm, we should awaken Christ, and call to him for aid, lest we shipwreck in so violent passions and impetuous disturbances. 2. Propound to thyself the example of meek and patient persons; remembering always, that there is a family of meek saints, of which Moses is the precedent; a family of patient saints, under the conduct of Job. Every one in the mountain of the Lord shall be gathered to his own tribe, to his own family, in the great day of jubilee: and the angry shall perish with the effects of anger; and peevish persons shall be vexed with the disquietness of an eternal worm, and sting of a vexatious conscience, if they suffer here the transportations and saddest effects of an unmortified, habitual, and prevailing anger. 3. Above all things endeavour to be humble, to think of thyself as thou deservest, that is, meanly and unworthily; and in reason, it is to be presumed, thou wilt be more patient of wrong, quiet under affronts and injuries, susceptive of inconveniences, and apt to entertain all adversities, as instruments of humiliation, deleteries of vice, corrections of indecent passions and instruments of virtue. 4. All the reason, and all the relations, and all the necessities of mankind, are daily arguments against the violences and inordinations of anger. For he that would not have his reason confounded, or his discourse useless, or his family be a den of lions; he that would not have his marriage a daily duel, or his society troublesome, or his friendship formidable, or his feasts bitter; he that delights not to have his discipline cruel, or his government tyrannical, or his disputations violent, or his civilities unmannerly; or his charity be a rudeness, or himself brutish as a bear, or peevish as a fly, or miserable upon every accident, and in all the changes of his life, must mortify his anger. For it concerns us as much as peace, and wisdom, and nobleness, and charity, and felicity are worth, to be at peace in our breasts, and to be

[t] Terminum etiam marinis fluctibus fabricator descripsit; arena maris exigua sæpè inter duas acies intercapedo est: si reprimere iram non potes, memento quia indignabundum mare nil ultra spumam et fluctuationem effert.—SIMOCATTA.

[u] Ex quo factus sum monachus, statui apud me, ut iracundia extra guttur meum non procederet, dixit S. Isaac Eremita.

[x] Melius enim est negare primum iræ introitum, etiam de causa probabili satis et gloriosa, quàm admissam ejicere.—S. AUG. ad Profuturum.

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pleased with all God's providence, and to be in charity with every thing, and with every man.

The Seventh Commandment.

37. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." These two commandments are immediate to each other, and of the greatest cognation; for anger and lust work upon one subject; and the same fervours of blood which make men revengeful, will also make men unchaste.[y] But the prohibition is repeated in the words of the old commandment: so "it was said to them of old;" which was not only a prohibition of the violation of the rights of marriage, but was, even among the Jews, extended to signify all mixture of sexes not matrimonial. For adultery, in Scripture, is sometimes used to signify fornication, and fornication for adultery; as it is expressed in the permissions of divorce, in the case of fornication: and by Moses's law, fornication also was forbidden; and it was hated also, and reproved, in the natural. But it is very probable, that this precept was restrained only to the instance of adultery in the proper sense, that is, violation of marriage; for Moses did, in other annexes of the law, forbid fornication. And as a blow or wound was not esteemed, in Moses's law, a breach of the sixth commandment; so neither was any thing but adultery esteemed a violation of the seventh, by very many of their own doctors: of which I reckon this a sufficient probation, because they permitted stranger virgins and captives to fornicate; only they believed it sinful in the Hebrew maidens. And when two harlots pleaded before Solomon for the bastard child, he gave sentence of their question, but nothing of their crime. Strangers,[z] with the Hebrews, signified, many times, harlots; because they were permitted to be such, and were entertained to such purposes. But these were the licenses of a looser interpretation; God having, to all nations, given sufficient testimony of his detestation of all concubinate not hallowed by marriage: of which, among the nations, there was abundant testimony; in that the harlots were not permitted to abide in the cities, and wore veils, in testimony of their shame and habitual indecencies; which we observe in the story of Thamar,[a] and also in Chrysippus. And, although it passed without punishment, yet never without shame, and a note of turpitude. And the abstinence from fornication was one of the precepts of Noah, to which the Jews obliged the stranger-proselytes, who were only proselytes of the house: and the apostles enforce it upon the gentiles, in their first decree at Jerusalem, as renewing an old stock of precepts and obligations, in which all the converted and religious gentiles did communicate with the Jews.

38. To this Christ added, that the eyes must not be adulterous; his disciples must not only abstain from the act of unlawful concubinate, but from the impurer intuition of a wife of another man: so, according to the design of his whole sermon, opposing the righteousness of the Spirit to that of the law, or of works, in which the Jews confided. Christians must have chaste desires, not indulging to themselves a liberty of looser thoughts;[b] keeping the threshold of their temples pure, that the Holy Ghost may observe nothing unclean in the entry of his habitation. For he that lusts after a woman wants nothing to the consummation of the act but some convenient circumstances; which, because they are not in our power, the act is impeded, but nothing of the malice abated. But so severe in this was our blessed Master, that he commanded us rather to "put our eyes out," than to suffer them to become an offence to us, that is, an inlet of sin, or an invitation or transmission of impurity: by "putting our eyes out," meaning the extinction of all incentives of lust, the rejection of all opportunities and occasions, the quitting all conditions of advantage which ministers fuel to this hell-fire. And by this severity we must understand all beginnings, temptations, likenesses, and insinuations and minutes of lust and impurity, to be forbidden to christians; such as are all morose delectations in vanity, wanton words, gestures, balls, revellings, wanton diet, garish and lascivious dressings and trimmings of the body, looser banquetings: all "making provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it," all lust of concupiscence, and all "lust of the eye," and all lust of the hand, unclean contracts, are to be rescinded, all lust of the tongue and palate, all surfeiting and drunkenness: for it is impossible to keep the spirit pure, if it be exposed to all the entertainment of enemies. And if Christ forbade the wanton eye, and placed it under the prohibition of adultery, it is certain, whatsoever ministers to that vice, and invites to it, is within the same restraint; it is the eye, or the hand, or the foot, that is to be cut off. To this commandment fastings and severe abstinences are apt to be reduced, as being the proper abscission of the instruments and temptations of lust, to which Christ invites by the mixed proposition of threatening and reward; for "better it is to go to heaven with but one eye, or one foot," that is, with a body half nourished, than with full meals and an active lust to "enter into hell." And in this our blessed Lord is a Physician rather than a Lawgiver: for abstinence from all impure concubinate, and morose delectations so much as in thought, being the commandment of God; that Christ bids us retrench the occasions and insinuations of lust, it is a facilitating

[y] Ubi furoris insederit virus, libidinis quoque incendium necesse est penetrare.—CASSIAN.

——— Numquid ego à te
Magno prognatam deposco Consule———
Velatamque stolâ, mea cùm conferbuit ira?
HORAT. Serm. lib. i. Sat. 2.

[z] Ξέναι vocârunt Græci meretrices et peregrinas, ad morem et ad verbum Hebræorum; et Menandrum transferens, Terentius peregrinam vocat Andriam.

[a] Gen. xxxviii. 14.

[b] Nihil refert quibus membris adulteraveris, dixit Archesilaus philosophus.—PLUTARCH.

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἔρωτος ὅρασις.—PLATO.

Ut jam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est:
Omnibus exclusis intus adulter erit.—OVID.

Incesta est etiam sine stupro quæ stuprum quærit.—SENECA.

Πόθεν τοτ' ἄρα γίνεται μοιχῶν γένος; ἐκ κριθιῶντος ἀνδρὸς ἐν ἀφροδισίοις.—CLEANTHES.

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the duty, not a new severity, but a security and caution of prudence.

The Eighth Commandment.

39. "Thou shalt not steal." To this precept Christ added nothing; because God had already, in the decalogue, fortified this precept with a restraint upon the desires.[c] For the tenth commandment forbids all coveting of our neighbour's goods:[d] for the wife there reckoned, and forbidden to be desired from another man, is not a restraint of libidinous appetite, but of the covetous; it being accounted part of wealth to have a numerous family, many wives, and many servants: and this also God, by the prophet Nathan, upbraided to David, as an instance of David's wealth and God's liberality. But yet this commandment Christ adopted into his law, it being prohibited by the natural law, or the law of right reason, commonwealths not being able to subsist without distinction of dominion, nor industry to be encouraged but by propriety, nor families to be maintained but by defence of just rights and truly purchased possessions. And this prohibition extends to all injustice, whether done by force or fraud; whether it be by ablation, or prevention, or detaining of rights; any thing in which injury is done, directly or obliquely, to our neighbour's fortune.[e]

The Ninth Commandment.

40. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." That is, thou shalt not answer in judgment against thy neighbour falsely:[f] which testimony, in the law, was given solemnly and by oath, invoking the name of God. "I adjure thee by God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ," said the high priest to the blessed Jesus, that is, speak upon thy oath; and then he told them fully, though they made it the pretence of murdering him, and he knew they would do so. Confessing and witnessing truth is giving glory to God: but false witness is high injustice, it is inhumanity and treason against the quietness, or life, or possession of a just person; it is in itself irregular and unreasonable, and, therefore, is so forbidden to christians, not only as it is unjust, but as it is false. For a lie in communication and private converse is also forbidden, as well as unjust testimony;[g] "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour,"[h] that is, in private society: and whether a lie be in jest or earnest, when the purpose is to deceive and abuse, though in the smallest instance, it is in that degree criminal as it is injurious.[i] I find not the same affirmed in every deception of our neighbours, wherein no man is injured, and some are benefited; the error of the affirmation being nothing but a natural irregularity, nothing malicious, but very charitable. I find no severity superadded by Christ to this commandment, prohibiting such discourse, which, without injury to any man, deceives a man into piety or safety. But this is to be extended no farther: in all things else we must be severe in our discourses, and "neither lie in a great matter nor a small, for the custom thereof is not good," saith the son of Sirach. I could add, concerning this precept, that Christ, having left it in that condition he found it in the decalogue, without any change or alteration of circumstance, we are commanded to give true testimony in judgment; which, because it was under an oath, there lies upon us no prohibition, but a severity of injunction, to swear truth in judgment when we are required. The securing of testimonies was by the sanctity of an oath, and this remains unaltered in christianity.

The Tenth Commandment.

41. "Thou shalt not covet." This commandment we find no where repeated in the gospel by our blessed Saviour; but it is inserted in the repetition of the second table, which St. Paul mentioned to the Romans: for it was so abundantly expressed in the enclosures of other precepts,[k] and the whole design of Christ's doctrines, that it was less needful specially to express that which is every where affixed to many precepts evangelical. Particularly it is inherent in the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" and it means, that we should not wish our neighbour's goods with a deliberate entertained desire, but that, upon the commencement of the motion, it be disbanded instantly: for he that does not at the first address and incitement of the passion suppress it, he hath given it that entertainment which, in every period of staying, is a degree of morose delectation in the appetite. And to this I find not Christ added any thing; for the law itself, forbidding to entertain the desire, hath commanded the instant and present suppression; they are the same thing, and cannot reasonably be distinguished. Now that Christ, in the instance of adultery, hath commanded to abstain also from occasions and accesses towards the lust, in this is not the same severity; because the

[c] Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi
Fugerit venis, et aquosus albo
Corpore languor.—HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 2.

[d] Ὁ γὰρ τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις ἐπικεχηνὼς, κοινὸς πόλεως ἐχθρός· βουλήσει μὲν πάντων, δυνάμει δὲ τὰ τῶν τίνων ἀφαιρούμενος.—PHILO in Exposit. Gener.

Κλοπὴ μὲν χρημάτων ἀνελεύθερον.
PLATO, lib. x. de Leg.

Δὼς ἀγαθὴ, ἅρπαξ δὲ κακὴ, θανάτοιο δότειρα.
HESIOD, lib. i. Ἔργ.

[e] Paulus J. C. lib. i. D. de Furtis. Ulpian. l. Probrum, D. de Verborum Significatione.

[f] Οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ ψεύδεσσι πατὴρ Ζεὺς ἵσσετ' ἀρωγός.
HOMER, lib. iv. Il.

Ὅς δὲ κε μαρτυρίησιν ἐκὼν ἐπίορκον ὀμόσσας
Ψεύσεται, ἐν δὲ δίκην βλάψας, νήκεστον ἄασθη,
Τοῦ δὲ τ' ἀμαυροτέρη γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται.
HESIOD, lib. i. Ἔργ.

[g] Ἀλήθεια ἐστι μεγάλη ἀρχὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς.—PIND.

Ψεῦδος δὲ μισεῖ πᾶς σοφὸς καὶ χρήσιμος.
MENAND.

[h] Ephes. iv. 25.

[i] Epaminondam ne joco quidem mentitum fuisse narrant fidi scriptores.—PROBUS.

Idem de Aristide refert Plutarchus.

[k] Furtum quoque sine ulla attrectatione fieri posse sola mente, atque animo ut furtum fiat annitente.—A. GELL. lib. xi. c. 18.

Has patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas.
Nam scelus intra se tantùm qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.——JUVENAL.

Non minùs esse turpe oculos quàm pedes in aliena immittere, dixit Xenocrates.

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vice of covetousness is not such a wild fire as lust is, not inflamed by contact, and neighbourhood of all things in the world: every thing may be instrumental to libidinous desires, but to covetous appetites there are not temptations of so different natures.

42. Concerning the order of these commandments, it is not unusefully observed, that, if we account from the first to the last, they are of greatest perfection which are last described; and he who is arrived to that severity and dominion of himself, as not to desire his neighbour's goods, is very far from actual injury, and so in proportion; it being the least degree of religion to confess but one God. But, therefore, vices are to take their estimate in the contrary order: he that prevaricates the first commandment is the greatest sinner in the world; and the least is he that only covets without any actual injustice. And there is no variety or objection in this, unless it be altered by the accidental difference of degrees; but in the kinds of sin the rule is true: this only, the sixth and seventh are otherwise in the Hebrew Bibles than ours, and in the Greek otherwise in Exodus than in Deuteronomy; and, by this rule, it is a greater sin to commit adultery than to kill; concerning which we have no certainty, save that St. Paul, in one respect, makes the sin of uncleanness the greatest of any sin, whose scene lies in the body: "Every sin is without the body, but he that commits fornication sins against his own body."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, Wisdom of thy Father, thou light of Jews and gentiles, and the great Master of the world, who, by thy holy sermons and clearest revelations of the mysteries of thy Father's kingdom, didst invite all the world to great degrees of justice, purity, and sanctity, and instruct us all in a holy institution, give us understanding of thy laws; that, the light of thy celestial doctrine illuminating our darknesses, and making bright all the recesses of our spirits and understandings, we may direct our feet, all the lower man, the affections of the inferior appetite, to walk in the paths of thy commandments. Dearest God, make us to live a life of religion and justice, of love and duty; that we may adore thy majesty, and reverence thy name, and love thy mercy, and admire thy infinite glories and perfections, and obey thy precepts. Make us to love thee for thyself, and our neighbours for thee: make us to be all love and all duty: that we may adorn the gospel of thee, our Lord, walking worthy of our vocation; that as thou hast called us to be thy disciples, so we may walk therein, doing the work of faithful servants, and may receive the adoption of sons, and the gift of eternal glory, which thou hast reserved for all the disciples of thy holy institution. Make all the world obey thee as a Prophet; that, being redeemed and purified by thee our High Priest, all may reign with thee, our King, in thy eternal kingdom, O eternal Jesus, Wisdom of thy Father. Amen.

OF THE THREE ADDITIONAL PRECEPTS WHICH CHRIST SUPERINDUCED, AND MADE PARTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW.

DISCOURSE XI.

Of Charity, with its Parts, Forgiving, Giving, not Judging.

OF FORGIVENESS.—PART I.

1. THE holy Jesus coming to reconcile all the world to God, would reconcile all the parts of the world one with another, that they may rejoice in their common band and their common salvation. The first instance of charity forbade to christians all revenge of injuries; which was a perfection and endearment of duty beyond what either most of the old philosophers,[a] or the laws of the nations, or of Moses, ever practised or enjoined. For revenge was esteemed to unhallowed, unchristian natures, as sweet as life, a satisfaction of injuries, and the only cure of maladies and affronts. Only laws of the wisest commonwealths commanded that revenge should be taken by the judge; a few cases being excepted, in which, by sentence of the law, the injured person, or his nearest relative, might be the executioner of the vengeance: as among the Jews, in the case of murder; among the Romans, in the case of an adulteress, or a ravished daughter, the father might kill the adulteress or the ravisher. In other things the judge only was to be the avenger. But Christ commanded his disciples, rather than to take revenge, to expose themselves to a second injury, rather "offer the other cheek," than be avenged for a blow on this; "for vengeance belongs to God," and he will retaliate: and to that "wrath we must give place," saith St. Paul;[b] that is, "in well-doing" and evil-suffering "commit ourselves to his righteous judgment," leaving room for his execution, who will certainly do it, if we snatch not the sword from his arm.

2. But some observe, that our blessed Saviour instanced but in smaller injuries: he that bade us suffer a blow on the cheek, did not oblige us tamely

[a] Plutarchus tamen multa præclara dicit de charitate erga inimicos. "Simplicitati et magnanimitati atque bonitati plus loci hic est quàm in amicitiis.——Oblatâ occasione ulciscendi inimicum, eum missum facere æquanimitatis est. Qui verò miseratur inimicum afflictum, et opem fert indigenti, et filiis ejus ac familiæ adverso ipsorum tempore operam suam studiumque defert, hunc qui non amat, huic pectus atrum est atque adamantinum," &c.—De Cap. ex Inim. Utilit.

Et Cicero dixit Cæsari; Pompeii statuas restituendo, tuas defixisti.

Justitiæ primum munus est, ut ne cui noceas, nisi lacessitus injuriâ.—CIC. de Offic.

Exod. xxi. 23. Levit. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21.

Idcirco judiciorum vigor, jurisque publici tutela videtur in medio constituta, ne quisquam sibi ipsi permittere valeat ultionem.—HONOR. et THEOD. in Cod. Theodos.

[b] Rom. xii. 19.

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to be sacrificed; he that enjoined us to put up the loss of our coat and cloak, did not signify his pleasure to be, that we should suffer our family to be turned out of doors, and our whole estate aliened and cancelled, especially we being otherwise obliged to provide for them under the pain of the curse of infidelity. And indeed there is much reason our defences may be extended, when the injuries are too great for our sufferance, or that our defence bring no greater damage to the other than we divert from ourselves. But our blessed Saviour's prohibition is instanced in such small particulars, which are no limitations of the general precept, but particulars of common consideration. "But I say unto you, resist not evil:"[c] so our English Testament reads it; but the word signifies "avenge not evil;" and it binds us to this only, that we be not avengers of the wrong, but rather suffer twice than once to be avenged. He that is struck on the face may run away, or may divert the blow, or bind the hand of his enemy; and he whose coat is snatched away, may take it again, if without injury to the other we may do it. We are sometimes bound to "resist evil:" every clearing of our innocence, refuting of calumnies, quitting ourselves of reproach, is a resisting evil; but such which is hallowed to us by the example of our Lord himself and his apostles. But this precept is clearly expounded by St. Paul: "Render not evil for evil;"[d] that is, be not revenged. You may either secure or restore yourselves to the condition of your own possessions or fame, or preserve your life, provided that no evil be returned to him that offers the injury. For so sacred are the laws of Christ, so holy and great is his example, so much hath he endeared us who were his enemies, and so frequently and severely hath he preached and enjoined forgiveness, that he who knows not to forgive, knows not to be like a christian, and a disciple of so gentle a Master.

3. So that the smallness or greatness of the instance alters not the case in this duty: in the greatest matters we are permitted only to an innocent defence, in the smallest we may do so too: I may as well hold my coat fast as my gold, and I may as well hide my goods as run away, and that is a defence; and if my life be in danger, I must do no more but defend myself; save only that defence, in case of life, is of a larger signification than in case of goods. I may wound my enemy, if I cannot else be safe; I may disarm him, or in any sense disable him; and this is extended even to a liberty to kill him, if my defence necessarily stands upon so hard conditions: for although I must not give him a wound for a wound,[e] because that cannot cure me, but is certainly revenge; yet when my life cannot be otherwise safe than by killing him, I have used that liberty which nature hath permitted me, and Christ hath not forbidden, who only interdicted revenge, and forbade no defence which is charitable and necessary, and not blended with malice and anger. And it is as much charity to preserve myself as him, when I fear to die.

4. But although we find this no where forbidden, yet it is very consonant to the excellent mercy of the gospel, and greatly laudable, if we choose rather to lose our life, in imitation of Christ, than save it by the loss of another's, in pursuance of the permissions of nature. When nature only gives leave, and no lawgiver gives command to defend our lives, and the excellence of christianity highly commends dying for our enemies, and propounds to our imitation the greatest example that ever could be in the world; it is a very great imperfection, if we choose not rather to obey an insinuation of the holy Jesus, than with greediness and appetite pursue the bare permissions of nature. But in this we have no necessity. Only this is to be read with two cautions: 1. So long as the assaulted person is in actual danger, he must use all arts and subterfuges which his wit or danger can supply him with, as, passive defence, flight, arts of diversion, entreaties, soft and gentle answers, or whatsoever is in its kind innocent, to prevent his sin and my danger; that when he is forced to his last defence, it may be certain he hath nothing of revenge mingled in so sad a remedy. 2. That this be not understood to be a permission to defend our lives against an angry and unjust prince:[f] for if my lawful prince should attempt my life with rage, or with the abused solemnities of law; in the first case the sacredness of his person, in the second, the reverence and religion of authority, are his defensatives, and immure him, and bind my hands, that I must not lift them up, but to Heaven, for my own defence and his pardon.

5. But the vain pretences of vainer persons have here made a question where there is no scruple; and if I may defend my life with the sword, or with any thing which nature and the laws forbid not, why not also mine honour, which is as dear as life, which makes my life without contempt, useful to my friend, and comfortable to myself? For to be reputed a coward, a baffled person, and one that will take affronts, is to be miserable and scorned, and to invite all insolent persons to do me injuries. May I not be permitted to fight for mine honour, and to wipe off the stains of my reputation? Honour is dear as life, and sometimes dearer. To this I have many things to say. For that which men in this question call honour, is nothing but a reputation amongst persons vain, unchristian in their deportment, empty and ignorant souls, who count that the standard of honour which is the instrument of reprobation; as if to be a gentleman were to be no christian. They that have built their reputation upon such societies, must take new estimates of it, according as the wine, or fancy, or custom, or some great fighting person shall determine it; and whatsoever invites a quarrel is a rule of honour. But then it is a sad consideration to remember, that it is accounted honour not to recede from any thing we have said or done: it is honour not to take the lie, in the mean time it is not dishonourable to lie indeed, but to

[c] Μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ sumitur sensu generali pro omni retaliatione.

[d] Rom. xii. 17.

[e] Succurram perituro, sed ut ipse non peream; nisi si futurus ero magni hominis aut magnæ rei merces.—SEN.

[f] Privatas inimicitias, non principis, ulciscar, dixit Tiberius.—TACIT. Annal. lib. iii

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be told so; and not to kill him that says it, and venture my life and his too, that is a forfeiture of reputation. A mistress's favour, in idle discourse, a jest, a jealousy, a health, a gaiety, any thing must engage two lives in hazard, and two souls in ruin; or else they are dishonoured. As if a life, which is so dear to a man's self, which ought to be dear to others, which all laws, and wise princes, and states, have secured by the circumvallation of laws and penalties, which nothing but heaven can recompense for the loss of, which is the breath of God, which to preserve Christ died, the Son of God died; as if this were so contemptible a thing, that it must be ventured for satisfaction of a vicious person, or a vain custom, or such a folly which a wise and a severe person had rather die than be guilty of. Honour is from him that honours; now certainly God and the king are the fountains of honour; right reason and religion, the Scripture and the laws, are the best rules of estimating honour: and if we offer to account our honours by the senseless and illiterate discourses of vain and vicious persons, our honour can be no greater than the fountain from whence it is derivative; and at this rate Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool, might have declared Thersites an honourable person, and every bold gladiator in a Roman theatre, or a fighting rebel among the slaves of Sparta, or a trooper of Spartacus's guard, might have stood upon their honour upon equal and as fair a challenge. Certainly there is no greater honour than to be like the holy Jesus; and he is delectable in the eyes of God, and so are all his relatives and followers, by participation of his honour; and nothing can be more honourable than to do wise and excellent actions, according to the account of Divine and human laws: and if either God or the king can derive honour upon their subjects, then whatsoever is contrary to that which they honour must needs be base, dishonourable, and inglorious.

6. But if we be troubled for fear of new and succeeding injuries, and will needs fight, and, as much as lies in us, kill our brother to prevent an injury,[s] nothing can be more unworthy of a christian, nothing can be more inhuman. Cato, pleading in the Roman senate in the behalf of the Rhodian ambassadors, who came to beg peace of the commonwealth, which had entertained an anger and some thoughts of war against them, upon pretence that the Rhodians would war with them when they durst, discoursed severely and prudently against such unreasonable purposes. And the life of men, and the interests of states, is not like the trade of fencers, whose lot is to conquer if they strike first, to die if they be prevented: man's life is not established upon so unequal and unreasonable necessities, that either we must first do an injury, or else it is certain we must receive a mischief. God's providence and care, in his government of the world, is more vigilant and merciful; and he protects persons innocent and just in all cases, except when he means to make an injury the instrument of a grace, or a violent death to be the gate of glory. It was not ill answered of Merope to king Polyphontes, who therefore killed his brother, because he had entertained a purpose to have killed him: "You should only have done the same injury to him which he did to you; you should still have had a purpose to kill him:" for his injustice went no farther; and it is hard to requite ill and uncertain purposes with actual murder, especially when we are as much secured by the power of laws, as the whole commonwealth is, in all its greatest interests. And, therefore, for christians to kill a man to prevent being baffled or despised, is to use an extreme desperate remedy, infinitely painful and deadly, to prevent a little griping in the belly, foreseen as possible to happen, it may be, three years after. But besides, this objection supposes a disease almost as earnestly to be cured as this of the main question; for it represents a man keeping company with lewd and debauched persons, spending his time in vanity, drunken societies, or engaged in lust, or placing his scene amongst persons apt to do affronts and unworthy misdemeanours; and indeed an affront, an injury, a blow, or a loud disgrace, is not the consequent of not fighting, but a punishment for engaging in loose, baser, and vicious company. If the gallants of the age would find an honest and a noble employment, or would be delicate in the choice of their friends and company, or would be severe in taking accounts of themselves and of their time, would live as becomes persons wise and innocent, that is, like christians, they would soon perceive themselves removed far from injuries, and yet farther from trouble, when such levities of mischance or folly should intervene. But suppose a man affronted or disgraced, it is considerable whether the man deserved it or not. If he did, let him entertain it for his punishment, and use it for an instrument of correction and humility; if he did not, as an instrument of fortitude and despite of lower things. But to venture lives to abolish a past act, is madness, unless in both those lives there was not good enough to be esteemed greater, and of better value, than the light affront had in it of misery and trouble. Certainly those persons are very unfortunate, in whose lives much more pleasure is not than there is mischief in a light blow, or a lighter affront, from a vain or an angry person. But suppose there were not, yet how can fighting or killing my adversary wipe off my aspersion, or take off my blow, or prove that I did not lie? For it is but an ill argument to say, If I dare kill him, then I did not lie; or if I dare fight, then he struck me not; or if I dare venture damnation, then I am an honourable person. And yet further, who gave me power over my own life, or over the life of another, that I shall venture my own, and offer to take his? God and God's vicegerent only are the lords of lives; who made us judges, and princes, or gods? and if we be not such, we are murderers and villains.

[s] Εἰ γὰρ σ' ἔμελλεν, ὡς σὺ φῂς, κτείνειν πόσις,
Χρὴ καὶ σὲ μέλλειν, ὡς χρόνοι δῆθεν παρῆν.—EURIP.
Quis hoc statuit unquam, aut cui concedi sine summo omnium periculo potest, ut eum jure potuerit occidere, à quo metuisse se dicat, ne ipse posterius occideretur?—CICERO.

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When Moses would have parted the duellists that fought in Egypt, the injurious person asked him, "Who made thee a judge or ruler over us? wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" meaning, he had no power to kill, none to judge of life and death, unless he had been made a ruler. Yea, but flesh and blood cannot endure a blow or a disgrace. Grant that too; but take this into the account, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." And yet, besides this, those persons have but a tender stock of reason, and wisdom, and patience, who have not discourse enough to make them bear an injury,[h] which the philosophy of the gentiles, without the light of christianity, taught them to tolerate with so much equanimity and dispassionate entertainment. That person is not a man, who knows not how to suffer the inconvenience of an accident and indiscretion of light persons; or if he could not, yet certainly that is a mad impatience, when a man, to remedy the pain of a drop of scalding water, shall drench himself in the liquid flames of pitch and a bituminous bath.

7. Truth is, to fight a duel is a thing that all kingdoms are bound to restrain with highest severity; it is a consociation of many the worst acts that a person ordinarily can be guilty of; it is want of charity, of justice, of humility, of trust in God's providence; it is therefore pride, and murder, and injustice, and infinite unreasonableness, and nothing of a christian, nothing of excuse, nothing of honour is in it, if God and wise men be admitted judges of the lists. And it would be considered, that every one that fights a duel must reckon himself as dead or dying (for however any man flatters himself by saying he will not kill, if he could avoid it; yet rather than be killed he will, and to the danger of being killed his own act exposes him): now, is it a good posture for a man to die with a sword in his hand, thrust at his brother's breast, with a purpose, either explicit or implicit, to have killed him? Can a man die twice, that, in case he miscarries and is damned for the first ill dying, he may mend his fault, and die better the next time? Can his vain, imaginary, and fantastic shadow of reputation, make him recompence for the disgrace and confusion of face, and pains and horrors of eternity? Is there no such thing as forgiving injuries, nothing of the discipline of Jesus in our spirits? are we called by the name of Christ, and have nothing in us but the spirit of Cain, and Nimrod, and Joab? If neither reason nor religion can rule us, neither interest nor safety can determine us, neither life nor eternity can move us, neither God nor wise men be sufficient judges of honour to us; then our damnation is just, but it is heavy; our fall is certain, but it is cheap, base, and inglorious. And let not the vanities, or the gallants of the world, slight this friendly monition, rejecting it with a scorn, because it is talking like a divine: it were no disparagement if they would do so too, and believe accordingly; and they would find a better return of honour in the crowns of eternity by talking like a divine, than by dying like a fool; by living in imitation and obedience to the laws of the holy Jesus, than by perishing or committing murder, or by attempting it, or by venturing it, like a weak, impotent, passionate, and brutish person. Upon this chapter it is sometimes asked, whether a virgin may not kill her ravisher to defend her chastity? Concerning which, as we have no special and distinct warrant, so there is, in reason and analogy of the gospel, much for the negative. For since his act alone cannot make her criminal, and is no more than a wound in my body, or a civil or a natural inconvenience, it is unequal to take a life in exchange for a lesser injury, and it is worse that I take it myself. Some great examples we find in story, and their names are remembered in honour; but we can make no judgment of them, but that their zeal was reprovable for its intemperance, though it had excellency in the matter of the passion.

8. But if we may not secure our honour, or be revenged for injuries by the sword, may we not crave the justice of the law, and implore the vengeance of the judge, who is appointed "for vengeance against evil doers?" and the judge being the king's officer, and the king God's vicegerent, it is no more than imploring God's hand; and that is "giving place to wrath," which St. Paul speaks of, that is, permitting all to the Divine justice. To this I answer, that it is not lawful to go to law for every occasion or slighter injury, because it is very distant from the mercies, forgiveness, and gentleness of a christian, to contest for trifles;[i] and it is certain that the injuries, or evil, or charges of trouble and expense, will be more vexatious and afflictive to the person contested, than a small instance of wrong is to the person injured. And it is a great intemperance of anger and impotence of spirit, a covetousness and impatience, to appeal to the judge for determination concerning a lock of camels' hair, or a goat's beard; I mean any thing that is less than the gravity of laws, or the solemnity of a court, and that does not outweigh the inconveniences of a suit. But this we are to consider in the expression of our blessed Saviour, "If a man will sue thee at the law, and take thy cloak, let him have thy coat also."[k] Which words are a particular instance in pursuit of the general precept, "Resist not," or "avenge not, evil." The primitive christians (as it happens in the first fervours of a discipline) were sometimes severe in observation of the letter, not subtly distinguishing counsels from precepts, but swallowing all the words of Christ without chewing or discrimination. They abstained from tribunals,[l] unless they were

[h] Οὗτος κράτιστός ἐστ' ἀνήρ, ——————
"Οστις ἀδικεῖσθαι πλεῖστ' ἐπίσταται βροτῶν.
Menand.

[i] Σχέτλιοι ἄνθρωποι ——————
Ποίων ἐκ τ' ἐρίδων καὶ λεσχομάχων πεπλάνησθε
Ἄνθρωποι, κενεῆς διήσεος ἔμπλεοι ἀσκοί.
Timon Phlias.

Inhumanum verbum est, at quidem pro justo receptum, ultio; et à contumeliâ non differt nisi ordine. Qui dolorem regerit, tantùm excusatiùs peccat.—Seneca, lib. ii. de Irâ, c. 32.

[k] Matt. v. 40.

[l] Οὐ δικάζονται τοῖς ἁρπάζουσι.—Athenag.

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repete = seek again

forced thither by persecutors; but went not thither to repeat their goods. And if we consider suits of law as they are wrapped in circumstances of action and practice, with how many subtleties and arts they are managed, how pleadings are made mercenary, and that it will be hard to find right counsel that shall advise you to desist, if your cause be wrong, (and therefore there is great reason to distrust every question, since, if it be never so wrong, we shall meet advocates to encourage us and plead for it,[m]) what danger of miscarriages, of uncharitableness, anger, and animosities, what desires to prevail, what care and fearfulness of the event, what innumerable temptations do intervene, how many sins are secretly insinuated in our hearts and actions; if a suit were of itself never so lawful, it would concern the duty of a christian to avoid it, as he prays against temptations, and cuts off the opportunities of a sin. It is not lawful for a christian to sue his brother at the law, unless he can be patient if he loses, and charitable if he be wronged, and can prosecute his end without any mixture of covetousness, or desires to prevail without envy, or can believe himself wrong when his judge says he is, or can submit to peace when his just cause is oppressed, and rejected, and condemned, and, without pain or regret, can sit down by the loss of his right, and of his pains and his money. And if he can do all this, what need he go to law? He may with less trouble and less danger take the loss singly, and expect God's providence for reparation, than disentitle himself to that by his own frowardness, and take the loss when it comes laden with many circumstances of trouble.

9. But however by accident it may become unlawful to go to law in a just cause, or in any, yet by this precept we are not forbidden. To go to law for revenge we are simply forbidden, that is, to return evil for evil; and therefore all those suits which are for vindictive sentences,[n] not for reparative, are directly criminal. To follow a thief to death, for spoiling my goods, is extremely unreasonable and uncharitable; for as there is no proportion between my goods and his life, (and therefore I demand it to his evil and injury,) so the putting him to death repairs not my estate: the first makes it in me to be unjust, the latter declares me malicious and revengeful. If I demand an eye for an eye, his eye extinguished will not enlighten mine; and therefore, to prosecute him to such purposes, is to resist or render evil with evil, directly against Christ's sermon. But if the postulation of sentence be in order only to restore myself, we find it permitted by St. Paul, who, when for the scandal's sake, he forbade "going to law before unbelievers," and for the danger and temptation's sake, and the latent irregularity, which is certainly appendant to ordinary litigations, he is angry indefinitely with them that go to law; yet he adviseth that christian arbitrators be appointed for decision of emergent questions. And therefore, when the supreme authority hath appointed and regularly established an arbitrator, the permission is the same. St. Paul[o] is angry, that among christians there should be suits, but it is therefore he is chiefly angry, because christians do wrong: they who should rather suffer wrong, yet that they should do it, and defraud their brother, which in some sense enforces suits; that is it he highly blames. But when injustice is done, and a man is in a considerable degree defrauded, then it is permitted to him to repeat his own before christian arbitrators, whether chosen by private consent or public authority; for that circumstance makes no essential alteration in the question: but then this must be done with as much simplicity and unmingled design as is possible, without any desire of rendering evil to the person of the offender, without arts of heightening the charge, without prolongation, devices, and arts of vexation, without anger and animosities; and then, although accidentally there is some appendant charge to the offending person, that is not accounted upon the stock of revenge, because it was not designed, and is not desired, and is cared for to prevent it as much as may be, and therefore offer was made of private and unchargeable arbitrators; and this being refused, the charge and accidental evil, if it be less than the loss of my sufferance and injury, must be reckoned to the necessities of affairs, and put upon the stock of his injustice, and will not affix a guilt upon the actor. I say, this is true, when the actor hath used all means to accord it without charge, and, when he is refused, manages it with as little as he can, and when it is nothing of his desire, but something of his trouble, that he cannot have his own without the lesser accidental evil to the offender, and that the question is great and weighty in his proportion; then a suit of law is of itself lawful.[p] But then let it be remembered, how many ways afterwards it may become unlawful; and I have no more to add in this article but the saying of the son of Sirach, "He that loves danger shall perish in it." And certainly he had need be an angel that manages a suit innocently; and he that hath so excellent a spirit, as with innocence to run through the infinite temptations of a law-suit, in all probability hath so much holiness as to suffer the injury, and so much prudence as to avoid the danger: and therefore, nothing but a very great defalcation, or ruin of a man's estate, will, from the beginning to the end, justify such a controversy. When the man is put to it so, that he cannot do some other duty without venturing in this, then the grace of God is sufficient for him; but he that enters lightly shall walk dangerously, and a thousand to one but he will fall foully. "It is utterly a fault among you," said St. Paul, "because

repete

[m] Nam lucrosæ hujus et sanguinantis eloquentiæ usus recens, et malis moribus natus, atque in locum teli repertus. QUINTIL. de Orator.

His qui bene facta canerent, non qui malè admissa defenderent, augustior honor apud deos.—Idem.

[n] Nova lex non se vindicat ultione gladii, i. e. privatus christianus vindictam nunquam petit.—TERTULL.

[o] 1 Cor. vi. 1, &c.

[p] Ὦ Πέρση, σὺ δὲ ταῦτα τεῷ ἐνικάτθεο θυμῷ,
Μὴ δὲ σ' ἔριτ κακόχαρτος ἀπ' ἔργου θυμὸν ἐρύκοι
Νείκε' ὀπιπτεύοντ', ἀγορῆς ἐπακουὸν ἐόντα·
Ὥρη γὰρ τ' ὀλίγη πίλεται νεικέων τ' ἀγορῶν τε
Ὅτινι μὴ βίος ἔνδον ἐπητανὸς κατάκειται
Ὡραῖος————HESIOD. Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερ. lib. 1.

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ye go to law one with another."[q] It is not always a crime, but ever a fault, and an irregularity, a recession from christian perfection, and an entertaining of a danger, which though we escape through, yet it was a fault to have entered into it, when we might have avoided it. And even then when it is "lawful" for us, it is "not expedient."[r] For so the apostle sums up his reprehension concerning christians going to law: We must "rather take wrong, rather suffer ourselves to be defrauded;"[s] and when we cannot bear the burden of the loss, then, indeed, we are permitted to appeal to christian judges; but then there are so many cautions to be observed, that, it may be, the remedy is worse than the disease. I only observe this one thing, that St. Paul permits it only in the instance of defrandation, or matter of interest; such as are defending of widows, and orphans, and churches, which, in estimation of law, are, by way of fiction, reckoned to be in pupilage and minority; add also repeating our own interests, when our necessities, or the support of our family and relatives, requires it: for all these are cases of charity or duty respectively. But besides the matter of defraudation, we find no instance expressed, nor any equality and parallel of reason, to permit christians in any case to go to law; because, in other things, the sentence is but vindictive, and cannot repair us; and therefore demanding justice is a rendering evil in the proper matter of revenge. Concerning which I know no scruple but in an action of scandal and ill report. But because an innocent and a holy life will force light out of darkness, and humility, and patience, and waiting upon God, will bring glory out of shame; I suppose he who goes to law to regain his credit, attempts the cure by incompetent remedies: if the accusation be public, the law will call him to an account, and then he is upon his defence, and must acquit himself with meekness and sincerity; but this allows not him to be the actor, for then it is rather a design of revenge than a proper deletery of his disgrace, and purgative of the calumny. For if the accusation can be proved, it was no calumny; if it be not proved, the person is not always innocent, and to have been accused leaves something foul in his reputation: and therefore, he that by law makes it more public, propagates his own disgrace, and sends his shame farther than his innocence, and the crime will go whither his absolution shall not arrive.

10. If it be yet further questioned, whether it be lawful to pray for a revenge, or a punishment upon the offender, (I reckon them all one; he that prays for punishment of him that did him personal injury, cannot easily be supposed to separate the punishment from his own revenge,) I answer, that although God be the avenger of all our wrongs, yet it were fit for us to have the affections of brethren, not the designs and purposes of a judge, but leave them to him to whom they are proper. When, in the bitterness of soul, an oppressed person curses sadly, and prays for vengeance, the calamity of the man and the violence of his enemy hasten a curse, and ascertain it. But whatever excuses the greatness of the oppression may make, I know not; but the bitterness of the spirit, besides that it is pitiable as it is a passion, yet it is violent and less christian, as it is active and sends forth prayers. Woe is pronounced "to them by whom the offence cometh;" yet we must "beware of offences," because by them we are engaged in a sin: and he that prays for a revenge hath a revengeful spirit, however it be restrained by laws and exterior tendernesses, from acting such dire purposes. And he that prays for revenge may indeed procure a justice to be done upon the injurious person; but oftentimes it happens then to fall on him when we least wish it, when we also have a conjunct interest in the other's preservation and escape: God so punishing the first wrong, that we also may smart for our uncharitable wishes. For the ground of all this discourse is, that it is part of christian charity to forgive injuries:[t] which forgiveness of the injury, although it may reasonably enough stand with my fair and innocent requiring of my own, which goes no farther than a fair repetition; yet in no case can it stand with the acting and desiring revenge, which also, in the formality of revenge, can have no pretence of charity, because it is ineffective to my restitution. This discourse concerns private persons; whether it concern the question of war, and how far, is not proper for this consideration.

OF ALMS.—PART II.

1. BUT christian charity hath its effect also in benefits as well as gentleness and innocence: "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."[a] These are the precepts of the Lord, for the substance and the manner of alms, for the quantity and freeness of the donative, and the simplicity of him that gives; to which add those other words of his, "Sell your possessions, and give alms."[b] This precept, with its circumstances, was intended as a defensative against covetousness and prodigality, and a suppletory to make up the wants, and to make even the breaches, of mankind: in which we shall best understand our obligation, if we consider in what proportion we must give alms, and to what persons, and in what manner.

2. First: For the quantity, we shall best take an estimate of it, if we remember the portion which God allows to christians: "having food and raiment, let us be content with it:"[c] and our blessed Saviour, at the latter end of this sermon, stirs us up to confidence in God, and not to doubt our provisions, by telling that God "feeds the ravens, and clothes the lilies, and he will much rather do it to us," he will clothe us and feed us; no more is in the promise, no more is in our need: and, therefore, whatsoever

[q] 1 Cor. vi. 7. Ὅλως ἥττημα, not παράπτωμα.
[r] Ver. 12.
[s] Ver. 7.
[t] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam. —TACIT.
[a] Matt. v. 42. vi. 3. [b] Luke xii. 33. [c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

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is, beside our needs, natural and personal, that is, proportioning our needs to the condition of our life, and exigence of our calling, and quality of our person, all that can be spared from what we modestly and temperately spend in our support, and the supply of our families, and other necessary incidents, all that is to be spent in charity or religion. He defrauds the poor of their right, who detains from them beyond his own necessary, prudent, and convenient supplies,[d] saith St. Hierom: and this is intended to be a retrenchment of all vain expenses, costly feasts, rich clothes, pompous retinue, and such excrescences of expense which, of themselves, serve no end of piety or just policy, but, by wise and temperate persons, are esteemed unnecessary, and without which the dignity and just value of the person may still be retained. Whatsoever is vainly spent was the portion of the poor;[e] whatsoever we lose in idle gaming, revelling, and wantonness or prodigality, was designed, by Christ, to refresh his own bowels, to fill the bellies of the poor; whatsoever lies in our repository useless and superfluous, all that is the poor man's inheritance: and certainly there is not any greater baseness than to suffer a man to perish, or be in extreme want of that which God gave me for him, and beyond my own needs. It is unthankfulness to God, it is unmercifulness to the poor, it is improvidence to ourselves,[f] it is unfaithfulness in the dispensation of the money of which God made him but the steward, and his chest the bank for the exchange and issuing it to the indigent. And he that is unmerciful and unjust is extremely unlike God. But in taking this estimate concerning our excrescences, we are to proceed according to the rules of prudence, not making determinations in grains and scruples, but in the greater actions and accountable proportions of our estates. And if any man, seeing great necessities of indigent and calamitous persons, shall give beyond his ability,[g] he had the Philippians for his precedent, and he hath God engaged for his payment, and a greater share in heaven for his reward. Only this; as we are to provide for ourselves, so also for our family, and the relatives of our charge and nearer endearments, not only with a provision of the present day's entertainment, but also for all nearer, probable, foreseen, and expected events, such as are portions for our children, dowries for our daughters: but this must not be extended to care and reservations for all possible and far distant events; but so much is to be permitted to the Divine providence as our present duty gives leave. In which, although a prudent guide and a sober reason are to make application to practice, yet the rule in general is, that by so much we are to relieve the poor, as we can deduct from such a portion of good things as God permits us to use for our own support, and reasonable and temporal conveniences of our person and condition; ever remembering, that if we increase in our estate, we also should increase in charity, that in this also may be verified what is written, "He that had much had nothing over, and he that had little had no lack." There is, in the quantity of these donatives, some latitude; but if we "sow sparingly," or if we scatter plentifully, so we shall reap; only we must be careful that no extreme necessity or biting want lies upon any poor man, whom we can relieve, without bringing such a want upon ourselves, which is less than the permissions of fortune which the mercies of God have permitted to us, that is, "food and raiment" proper for us. Under "food and raiment" all the necessaries of our life are to be understood: whatsoever is more than this is counsel and perfection; for which a proportionable reward is deposited in the treasures of eternity.

3. Secondly: If question be made concerning the persons, who are to be the object of our alms, our rule is plain and easy; for nothing is required in the person suscipient and capable of alms, but that he be in misery and want, and unable to relieve himself. This last clause I insert in pursuance of that caution given to the church of Thessalonica by St. Paul, "If any one will not work, neither let him eat;"[h] for we must be careful that our charity, which is intended to minister to poor men's needs, do not minister to idleness and the love of beggary, and a wandering, useless, and unprofitable life. But, abating this, there is no other consideration that can exempt any needy person from participation of your charity; not, though he be your enemy;[i] (for that is it which our blessed Saviour means in the appendix of this precept, "Love your enemies," that is, according to the exposition of the apostle, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink;") not, though he be an unbeliever; not, though he be a vicious person;[k] provided only that the vice be such to which your relief ministers no fuel, and adds no flame; and if the mere necessities of his nature be supplied, it will be a fair security against the danger; but if the vice be in the scene of the body, all freer comforts are to be denied him, because they are but incentives of sin, and angels of darkness. This I the rather insert, that the pride and supercilious austerities of some persons become not to them an instrument of excuse from ministering to needy persons, upon pretence their own sins brought them into that condition. For though the causes of our calamities are many times great secrets of Providence, yet suppose the poverty of the man was the effect of his prodigality, or other baseness,

[d] Aliena rapere convincitur, qui ultra sibi necessaria retinere probatur.—GRATIAN. Dist. 42.

[e] Cur eget indignus quisquam te divite?—HOR. lib. ii. Sat. 2. James v. 2, 3.

[f] Callidus effractâ nummos fur auferat arcâ:
Quas dederis, solas semper habebis opes.—MARTIAL.

[g] Hoc nam est maximum incentivum misericordiæ, ut compatiamur alienis calamitatibus quantum possumus, imò interdum plus quàm possumus.—S. AMBR. lib. ii. de Offic.

[h] 2 Thess. iii. 10.

[i] "Ὅταν δέῃ συγκινδυνεῦσαι φίλῳ ἢ πατρίδι, μὴ μαντεύεσθαι, εἰ συγκινδυνευτέον.
——καὶ γὰρ ὁ Πύθιος ἐξέβαλε τοῦ ναοῦ τὸν οὐ βοηθήσαντα ἀναιρουμένῳ τῷ φίλῳ.—EPICT. c. 39.

[k] Herodes Atticus, vir Consularis, quum palliatus quidam specie philosophi stipem emendicâsset, respondit, Domus huic aliquid æris cujusmodi est, tanquam homines, non tanquam homini.—A. GELL. lib. ix. c. 2.

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it matters not, as to our duty, how he came into it, but where he is; lest we also be denied a visit in our sicknesses, and a comfort in our sorrow, or a counsel in our doubts, or aid in any distress, upon pretence that such sadness was procured by our sins: and ten to one but it was so. "Do good to all," saith the apostle, "but especially to the family of faith;" for to them our charity is most proper and proportioned: to all, viz. who are in need, and cannot relieve themselves; in which number persons that can work are not to be accounted. So that if it be necessary to observe an order in our charity, that is, when we cannot supply and suffice for all our opportunities of mercy, then "let not the brethren of our Lord go away ashamed;" and in other things observe the order and propriety of our own relations, and where there is otherwise no difference, the degree of the necessity is first to be considered.[1] This also, if the necessity be final and extreme, whatever the man be, he is first to be relieved, before the lesser necessities of the best persons or most holy poor. But the proper objects of our charity are old persons, sick or impotent, laborious and poor housekeepers, widows and orphans, people oppressed or persecuted for the cause of righteousness, distressed strangers, captives and abused slaves, prisoners for debt. To these we must be liberal, whether they be holy or unholy, remembering that we are sons of that Father who makes the dew of heaven to drop upon the dwellings of the righteous and the fields of sinners.

4. Thirdly: The manner of giving alms is an office of christian prudence; for in what instances we are to exemplify our charity, we must be determined by our own powers, and others' needs. The Scripture reckons entertaining strangers, visiting the sick, going to prisons, feeding and clothing the hungry and naked; to which, by the exigence of the poor, and the analogy of charity, many other are to be added. The holy Jesus, in the very precept, instanced in lending money to them that need to borrow; and he adds, "looking for nothing again," that is, if they be unable to pay it.[m] Forgiving debts is a great instance of mercy, and a particular of excellent relief; but to imprison men for debt, when it is certain they are not able to pay it, and by that prison will be far more disabled, is an uncharitableness next to the cruelties of savages, and at infinite distance from the mercies of the holy Jesus.

[1] ——— nunc sportula primo
Limine parva sedet turbæ rapienda togatæ.
Ille tamen faciem priùs inspicit, et trepidat ne
Suppositus venias, et falso nomine poscas.
JUVEN. Satyr. 1.

Οἱ τὰς ὀφρῦς αἴροντες ὡς ἀβέλτεροι,
Καὶ Σκέψομαι, λέγοντες· ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ὢν
Σκέψῃ σὺ περὶ τοῦ, δυστυχὴς ὅταν τύχῃ.—MENAND.

[m] Amicitiam si ad fructum nostrum referemus, non ad illius commoda quem diligimus, non erit ista amicitia, sed mercatura quædam utilitatum suarum: prata, et arva, et pecudum greges diliguntur isto modo, quòd fructus ex eis capiuntur; hominum charitas et amicitia gratuita est.—CICER. de Nat. Deor. lib. i.

[n] Qui ne tuberibus propriis offendat amicum
Postulat, ignoscat verrucis illius: æquum est
Peccatis veniam poscentem, reddere rursus.
HORAT. lib. i. Sat. 3.

Ne judices proximum, donec ad ejus locum pertingas.—Prov. Judæor.

——— eheu
Quàm temerè in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!
Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ille est
Qui minimis urgetur. HORAT. ibid.

OF NOT JUDGING.—PART III.

ANOTHER instance of charity our great Master inserted in this sermon, "not to judge our brother:" and this is a charity so cheap and so reasonable, that it requires nothing of us but silence in our spirits. We may perform this duty at the charge of a negative; if we meddle not with other men's affairs, we shall do them no wrong, and purchase to ourselves a peace, and be secured the rather from the unerring sentence of a severe Judge. But this interdict forbids only such judging as is ungentle and uncharitable: in criminal causes, let us find all the ways to alleviate the burden of the man by just excuses, by extenuating or lessening accidents, by abatement of incident circumstances, by gentle sentences, and whatsoever can do relief to the person, that his spirit be not exasperated, that the crime be not the parent of impudence, that he be not insulted on, that he be invited to repentance, and, by such sweetnesses, he be led to his restitution. This also, in questions of doubts, obliges us to determine to the more favourable sense; and we also do need the same mercies, and, therefore, should do well, by our own rigour, not to disentitle ourselves to such possibilities and reserves of charity.[n] But it is foul and base, by detraction and iniquity, to blast the reputation of an honourable action, and the fair name of virtue with a calumny. But this duty is also a part of the grace of justice and of humility, and, by its relation and kindred to so many virtues, is furnished with so many arguments of amity and endearment.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and merciful Jesus, who art the great principle and the instrument of conveying to us the charity and mercies of eternity, who didst love us when we were enemies, forgive us when we were debtors, recover us when we were dead, ransom us when we were slaves, relieve us when we were poor, and naked, and wandering, and full of sadness and necessities; give us the grace of charity, that we may be pitiful and compassionate of the needs of our necessitous brethren, that we may be apt to relieve them, and that, according to our duty and possibilities, we may rescue them from their calamities. Give us courteous, affable, and liberal souls; let us, by thy example, forgive our debtors, and love our enemies, and do to them offices of civility, and tenderness, and relief: always propounding thee for our pattern, and thy

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mercies for our precedent, and thy precepts for our rule, and thy Spirit for our guide; that we, showing mercy here, may receive the mercies of eternity by thy merits, and by thy charities, and dispensation, O holy and merciful Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XII.

Of the second additional Precept of Christ; namely, of Prayer.

1. THE soul of a christian is the house of God: 'Ye are God's building,"[a] saith St. Paul; but the house of God is the house of prayer: and, therefore, prayer is the work of the soul, whose organs are intended for instruments of the Divine praises; and when every stop and pause of those instruments is but the conclusion of a collect, and every breathing is a prayer, then the body becomes a temple, and the soul is the sanctuary, and more private recess, and place of intercourse. Prayer is the great duty and the greatest privilege of a christian; it is his intercourse with God, his sanctuary in troubles, his remedy for sins, his cure of griefs, and, as St. Gregory calls it, "it is the principal instrument whereby we minister to God, in execution of the decrees of eternal predestination;" and those things which God intends for us, we bring to ourselves by the mediation of holy prayers. Prayer is the "ascent of the mind to God, and a petitioning for such things as we need for our support and duty."[b] It is an abstract and summary of christian religion. Prayer is an act of religion and Divine worship,[c] confessing his power and his mercy; it celebrates his attributes, and confesses his glories, and reveres his person, and implores his aid, and gives thanks for his blessings: it is an act of humility, condescension, and dependence, expressed in the prostration of our bodies, and humiliation of our spirits: it is an act of charity, when we pray for others; it is an act of repentance, when it confesses and begs pardon for our sins, and exercises every grace according to the design of the man, and the matter of the prayer. So that there will be less need to amass arguments to invite us to this duty; every part is an excellence, and every end of it is a blessing, and every design is a motive, and every need is an impulsive to this holy office. Let us but remember how many needs we have, at how cheap a rate we may obtain their remedies, and yet how honourable the employment is, to go to God with confidence, and to fetch our supplies with easiness and joy; and then, without further preface, we may address ourselves to the understanding of that duty by which we imitate the employment of angels and beatified spirits, by which we ascend to God in spirit while we remain on earth, and God descends on earth while he yet resides in heaven, sitting there on the throne of his kingdom.

2. Our first inquiry must be concerning the matter of our prayers; for our desires are not to be the rule of our prayers, unless reason and religion be the rule of our desires. The old heathens prayed to their gods for such things which they were ashamed to name publicly before men;[d] and these were their private prayers, which they durst not, for their indecency or iniquity, make public. And, indeed, sometimes the best men ask of God things not unlawful in themselves, yet very hurtful to them: and, therefore, as by the Spirit of God and right reason we are taught, in general, what is lawful to be asked; so it is still to be submitted to God, when we have asked lawful things, to grant to us in kindness, or to deny us in mercy: after all the rules that can be given us, we not being able, in many instances, to judge for ourselves, unless also we could certainly pronounce concerning future contingencies. But the Holy Ghost being now sent upon the church, and the rule of Christ being left to his church, together with his form of prayer, taught and prescribed to his disciples, we have sufficient instruction for the matter of our prayers, so far as concerns the lawfulness or unlawfulness. And the rule is easy and of no variety. 1. For we are bound to pray for all things that concern our duty, all that we are bound to labour for; such as are glory and grace, necessary assistances of the Spirit, and rewards spiritual, heaven, and heavenly things. 2. Concerning those things which we may, with safety, hope for, but are not matter of duty to us, we may lawfully testify our hope and express our desires by petition; but if, in their particulars, they are under no express promise, but only conveniences of our life and person, it is only lawful to pray for them under condition, that they may conform to God's will and our duty, as they are good, and placed in the best order of eternity. Therefore, 1. For spiritual blessings let our prayers be particularly importunate, perpetual, and persevering: 2. For temporal blessings let them be generally short,[e] conditional, and modest: 3. And whatsoever things are of a mixed nature, and more spiritual than riches, and less necessary than graces, such as are gifts and exterior aids, we may pray for them as we may desire them, and as we may expect them; that is, with more confidence and less restraint than in the

[a] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

[b] Ἀνάβασις νοῦ πρὸς Θεὸν, καὶ αἴτησις τῶν προσηκόντων παρὰ Θεοῦ.—DAMASC. lib. iii. Orthodox. Fid.

[c] Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille deos: qui rogat, ille facit.

[d] Cujusmodi ridet Lucianus in Icaro-Menippo: Ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸ βασιλεῦσαι μοι γένοιτο· ὦ Ζεῦ, τὰ κρόμμυα μοι φῦναι καὶ τὰ σκόροδα· ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸν πατέρα μοι ταχέως ἀποθανεῖν· ὁ δὲ τις ἂν φαίη, εἶτε κληρονομήσαι με τῆς γυναικός· εἶτε ἀθοιμι ἐπιβουλεύσας τῷ ἀδελφῷ· γένοιτο μοι νικῆσαι τὴν ἵππον, στεφθῆναι τὰ ὀλύμπια· τῶν πλεόντων ὁ μὲν Βορέαν εὔχετο ἐπιπνεῦσαι, ὁ δὲ Νότον· ὁ δὲ γεωργὸς ἤτει ὑετὸν, ὁ δὲ ἀναφεὺς ἥλιον.

[e] ——— Si tacito mala vota susurro
Concipimus ——— Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem.—HORAT
——— Si consilium vis,
Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris;
Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii.
JUVENAL. Sat. x. 346.
Exorari in perniciem rogantium, sæva benignitas est.
——— Multa petentibus
Desunt multa. Bene est, cui Deus obtulit
Parcâ, quod satis est, manu. HOR. lib. iii. Od. 16.

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matter of temporal requests, but with more reservedness, and less boldness of petition, than when we pray for the graces of sanctification. In the first case we are bound to pray; in the second, it is only lawful under certain conditions; in the third, it becomes to us an act of zeal, nobleness, and christian prudence. But the matter of our prayers is best taught us in the form our Lord taught his disciples; which, because it is short, mysterious, and like the treasures of the Spirit, full of wisdom and latent senses, it is not improper to draw forth those excellencies, which are intended and signified by every petition; that, by so excellent an authority, we may know what it is lawful to beg of God.[f]

3. "Our Father, which art in heaven." The address reminds us of many parts of our duty. "If God be our Father, where is" his fear, and reverence, and obedience? "If ye were Abraham's children,[g] ye would do the works of Abraham;" and, "Ye are of your father, the devil, for his works ye do." Let us not dare to call him Father, if we be rebels and enemies; but if we be obedient, then we know he is our Father, and will give us a child's portion, and the inheritance of sons. But it is observable, that Christ, here speaking concerning private prayer, does describe it in a form of plural signification; to tell us, that we are to draw into the communication of our prayers all those who are confederated in the common relation of sons to the same Father. "Which art in heaven,"[h] tells us where our hopes and our hearts must be fixed, whither our desires and our prayers must tend. *Sursum corda;* "Where our treasure is, there must our hearts be also."

4. "Hallowed be thy name." That is, Let thy name, thy essence, and glorious attributes, be honoured and adored in all the world, believed by faith, loved by charity, celebrated with praises, thanked with eucharist; and let thy name be hallowed in us, as it is in itself. Thy name being called upon us, let us walk worthy of that calling; that "our light may shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify thee, our Father, which art in heaven." In order, also, to the sanctification of thy name, grant that all our praises, hymns, eucharistical remembrances, and representments of thy glories, may be useful, blessed, and effectual, for the dispersing thy fame, and advancing thy honour over all the world. This is a direct and formal act of worshipping and adoration. The name of God is representative of God himself, and it signifies: Be thou worshipped and adored, be thou thanked and celebrated, with honour and eucharist.

5. "Thy kingdom come." That is, As thou hast caused to be preached and published the coming of thy kingdom, the peace and truth, the revelation and glories, of the gospel; so let it come verily and effectually to us, and all the world; that thou mayest truly reign in our spirits, exercising absolute dominion, subduing all thine enemies, ruling in our faculties, in the understanding by faith, in the will by charity, in the passions by mortification, in the members by a chaste and right use of the parts. And as it was more particularly, and in the letter, proper at the beginning of Christ's preaching, when he also taught the prayer, that God would hasten the coming of the gospel to all the world; so now also, and ever it will be, in its proportion, necessary and pious, to pray that it may come still; making greater progress in the world, extending itself where yet it is not, and intending it where it is already; that the kingdom of Christ may not only be in us, in name and form, and honourable appellatives, but in effect and power. This petition, in the first ages of christianity, was not expounded to signify a prayer for Christ's second coming; because, the gospel not being preached to all the world, they prayed for the delay of the day of judgment, that Christ's kingdom upon earth might have its proper increment: but since then, every age, as it is more forward in time, so it is more earnest in desire, to accomplish the intermedial prophecies, that the kingdom of God the Father might come in glories infinite. And, indeed, the kingdom of grace being in order to the kingdom of glory, this, as it is principally to be desired, so may possibly be intended chiefly: which, also, is the more probable, because the address of this prayer being to God the Father, it is proper to observe, that the kingdom of grace, or of the gospel, is called the kingdom of the Son;[i] and that of glory, in the style of the Scripture, is the kingdom of the Father. St. German, patriarch of Constantinople, expounds it with some little difference, but not ill: "Thy kingdom come," that is, let thy Holy Spirit come into us; for "the kingdom of heaven is within us," saith the holy Scripture: and so it intimates our desires, that the promise of the Father, and the prophecies of old, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, may come upon us. Let that "anointing from above" descend upon us, whereby we may be anointed kings and priests, in a spiritual kingdom and priesthood, by a holy chrism.

6. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." That is, the whole economy and dispensation of thy providence, be the guide of the world, and the measure of our desire; that we be patient in all accidents, conformable to God's will, both in doing and in suffering; submitting to changes, and even to persecutions, and doing all God's will: which because without God's aid we cannot do, therefore we beg it of him by prayer; but by his aid we are confident we may do it, in the manner of angelical obedience; that is, promptly, readily, cheerfully, and with all our faculties. Or thus: As the angels in heaven serve thee with harmony, concord, and peace;

[f] Oratio hæc, quantum substringitur verbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus.—TERTULL. Evangelii Breviarum. Idem l. de Orat. c. 1.

Si tamen rectè et congruenter oramus, nihil aliud dicere possumus quàm quod in Oratione Dominicâ continetur.—S. AUG. ad Frat. in Erem.

[g] Vir bonus vera Dei progenies.—SENEC. de Provident.

Καὶ τοῦ μὲν γένος ἐσμέν.—MENAND.

Hoc donum excedit omne donum, ut Deus hominem vocet filium.—LEO. Ser. de Nativ.

Matt. xxiii. 8. Eph. iv. 6.

[h] Nihil nos delectet in infimis, qui Patrem habemus in cœlis —LEO. Ser. de Ascens.

[i] Colos. i. 13. Rev. i. 9. Matt. xiii. 41. Luke vi. 20. Matt. xvi. 28.

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so let us all join in the service of thy majesty, with peace and purity, and love unfeigned; that as all the angels are in peace, and amongst them there is no persecutor, and none persecuted, there is none afflicting or afflicted, none assaulting or assaulted, but all, in sweetness and peaceable serenity, glorifying thee; so let thy will be done on earth, by all the world, in peace and unity, in charity and tranquillity: that with one heart, and one voice, we may glorify thee our universal Father; having in us nothing that may displease thee, having quitted all our own desires and pretensions, living in angelic conformity, our souls subject to thee, and our passions to our souls; that "in earth," also, "thy will" may "be done," as in the spirit and soul, which is a portion of the heavenly substance. These three petitions are addressed to God, by way of adoration. In the first, the soul puts on the affections of a child, and divests itself of its own interest, offering itself up wholly to the designs and glorifications of God. In the second, it puts on the relation and duty of a subject to her legitimate prince, seeking the promotion of his regal interest. In the third, she puts on the affection of a spouse, loving the same love, and choosing the same objects, and delighting in unions and conformities. The next part descends lower, and makes addresses to God in relation to our own necessities.

7. "Give us this day our daily bread."[k] That is, give unto us all that is necessary for the support of our lives, the bread of our necessity: so the Syriac interpreter reads it: "This day give us the portion of bread, which is day by day necessary." Give us the bread or support which we shall need all our lives; only this day minister our present part. For we pray for the necessary bread or maintenance, which God knows we shall need all our days; but, that we "be not careful for to-morrow," we are taught to pray, not that it be all at once represented or deposited, but that God would minister it as we need it, how he pleases: but our needs are to be the measure of our desires, our desires must not make our needs; that we may be confident of the Divine providence, and not at all covetous: for therefore God feeds his people with extemporary provisions, that by needing always, they may learn to pray to him; and, by being still supplied, may learn to trust him for the future, and thank him for that is past, and rejoice in the present. So God rained down manna, giving them their daily portion; and so all fathers and masters minister to their children and servants, giving them their proportion as they eat it, not the meat of a year at once; and yet no child or servant fears want, if his parent or lord were good, and wise, and rich. And it is necessary for all to pray this prayer: the poor, because they want the bread, and have it not deposited but in the hands of God: "mercy ploughing the fields of heaven," (as Job's expression is,) brings them corn; and "the cattle upon a thousand hills are God's;" and they find the poor man meat. The rich also need this prayer; because, although they have the bread, yet they need the blessing; and what they have now may perish, or be taken from them; and as preservation is a perpetual creation, so the continuing to rich men what God hath already bestowed is a continual giving it. Young men must pray, because their needs are like to be the longer; and old men, because they are present. But all these are to pray but for the present;[l] that which, in estimation of law, is to be reckoned as imminent upon the present, and part of this state and condition. But it is great improvidence, and an unchristian spirit, for old men to heap up provisions, and load their sumpters still the more, by how much their way is shorter. But there is also a bread which came down from heaven, a diviner nutriment of our souls, the food and wine of angels, Christ himself, as he communicates himself in the expresses of his word and sacraments; and if we be destitute of this bread, we are miserable and perishing people. We must pray, that our souls also may feed upon those celestial viands, prepared for us in the antepasts of the gospel, till the great and fuller meal of the supper of the Lamb shall answer all our prayers, and satisfy every desire.

8. "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Not only those sins of infirmity, invasion, and sudden surprise, which, like excrescences of luxuriant trees, adhere to many actions by inadvertency, and either natural weakness or accidental prejudice; but also all those great sins, which were washed off from our souls, and the stain taken away in baptism; or when by choice, and after the use of reason, we gave up our names to Christ, when we first received the adoption of sons: for even those things were so pardoned, that we must for ever confess and glory in the Divine mercy, and still ascertain it, by performing what we then promised, and which were the conditions of our covenant. For although Christ hath taken off the guilt, yet still there remains the disreputation; and St. Paul calls himself "the chiefest of sinners," not referring to his present condition, but to his former persecuting the church of God, which is one of the greatest crimes in the world;

[k] Ἐπιούσιον, ab ἐπιοῦσα, quod *diem posterum* significat. Nazarenorum Evangelium (referente S. Hieronymo) legit *panem crastinum*; S. Lucas *panem diurnum*, sive indies necessarium, τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν· πλοῦτός ἐστι κτῆσις σύμμετρος πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν.

Vivitur parvo bene, cui paternum
Splendet in mensa tenui salinum,
Nec leves somnos timor aut cupido
Sordidus aufert. HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 16.
Fructibus Agrippæ Siculis, quos colligis, Icci,
Si rectè frueris, non est ut copia major
Ab Jove donari possit tibi; tolle querelas:
Pauper enim non est cui rerum suppetit usus.

Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus.
HORAT. ad Iccium, lib. ii. Ep. 12.

Μὴ μόνον τοῦ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ ἀποθνήσκειν, τὴν τροφὴν εἶναι ἐφόδιον.—PLUTARCH.

[l] Lætus in præsens animus quod ultrà est
Oderit curare; et amara lætо
Temperet risu. HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 16.
——— quid æternis minorem
Consiliis animum fatigas? HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 11.
Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam:
Jam te premet nox, fabulæque manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia. HORAT. lib. i. Od. 4.
Ἀναγκιότατον ἐφόδιον.—Conc. Nicen.

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and for ever he asked pardon for it; and so must we, knowing that they may return; if we shake off the yoke of Christ, and break his cords from us, the bands of the covenant evangelical, the sins will return so as to undo us. And this we pray, with a tacit obligation to forgive; for so only, and upon that condition, we beg pardon to be given or continued respectively; that is, as we from our hearts forgive them that did us injury in any kind, never entertaining so much as a thought of revenge, but, contrariwise, loving them that did us wrong; for so we beg that God should do to us: and, therefore, it is but a lesser revenge to say, I will forgive, but I will never have to do with him. For if he become an object of charity, we must have to do with him, to relieve him; because he needs prayers, we must have to do with him, and pray for him: and to refuse his society, when it is reasonably and innocently offered, is to deny that to him, which christians have been taught to deny only to persons excommunicate, to persons under punishment, i. e. to persons not yet forgiven: and we shall have but an evil portion, if God should forgive our sins, and should not also love us,[m] and do us grace, and bestow benefits upon us. So we must forgive others; so God forgives us.

9. "And lead us not into temptation." St. Cyprian, out of an old Latin copy, reads it, "Suffer us not to be led into temptation;"[n] that is, suffer us not to be overcome by temptation. And, therefore, we are bound to prevent our access to such temptation, whose very approximation is dangerous, and the contact is irregular and evil; such as are temptations of the flesh: yet, in other temptations, the assault sometimes makes confident, and hardens a resolution. For some spirits, who are softened by fair usages, are steeled and imboldened by a persecution. But of what nature soever the temptations be, whether they be such whose approach a christian is bound to fear, or such which are the certain lot of christians, (such are troubles and persecutions, into which, "when we enter," we must "count it joy,") yet we are to pray, that we enter not into the possession of the temptation, that we be not overcome by it.

10. "But deliver us from evil." From the assaults or violence of evil, from "the wicked one," who not only presents us with objects, but heightens our concupiscence, and makes us imaginative, fantastical, and passionate; setting on the temptation, making the lust active, and the man full of appetite, and the appetite full of energy and power: therefore deliver us from the evil one, who is interested, as an enemy, in every hostility, and in every danger. Let not Satan have any power or advantage over us; and let not evil men prevail upon us in our danger, much less to our ruin. Make us "safe under the covering of thy wings," against all fraud and every violence; that no temptation destroy our hopes, or break our strength, or alter our state, or overthrow our glories. In these last petitions, which concern ourselves, the soul hath affections proper to her own needs; as in the former proportion, to God's glory. In the first of these, the affection of a poor, indigent, and necessitous beggar; in the second, of a delinquent and penitent servant; in the last, of a person in affliction or danger. And, after all this, the reason of our confidence is derived from God.

11. "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever." That is, these things which we beg, are for the honour of thy kingdom, for the manifestation of thy power, and the glory of thy name and mercies: and it is an express doxology or adoration, which is apt and fit to conclude all our prayers and addresses to God.

12. These are the generals and great treasures of matter, to which all our present or sudden needs are reducible; and when we make our prayers more minute and particular, if the instance be in matter of duty, and merely spiritual, there is no danger: but when our needs are temporal, or we are transported with secular desires, all descending to particulars is a confining the Divine Providence, a judging for ourselves, a begging a temptation oftentimes, sometimes a mischief:[o] and to beg beyond the necessities of our life, is a mutiny against that Providence, which assigns to christians no more but "food and raiment" for their own use: all other excrescencies of possessions being intrusted to the rich man's dispensation, only as to a steward; and he shall be accountable for the coat that lies by him, as the portion of moths, and for the shoes which are the spoils of mouldiness, and the contumely of plenty. "Grant me, O Lord, not what I desire, but what is profitable for me."[p] For sometimes we desire that, which in the succeeding event of things will undo us. This rule is in all things that concern ourselves. There is some little difference in the affairs and necessities of other men: for, provided we submit to the Divine Providence, and pray for good things for others, only with a tacit condition, so far as they are good and profitable, in order to the best ends; though we be particular, there is no covetousness in it; there may be indiscretion in the particular; but in the general no fault, because it is a prayer, and a design of charity. "For kings, and all that are in authority," we may yet enlarge, and pray for a peaceable reign, true lieges, strong armies, victories and fair success in their just wars, health, long life, and riches; because they have a capacity which private persons have not:[q] and whatsoever is good for single persons, and whatsoever is apt for their

[m] Parùm est nobis non puniri, nisi mereamur et diligi.—HUGO de S. Victor. Allegat. in Matt. lib. iii.

[n] Τί γὰρ; Θεὸς εἰσάγει ἄνθρωπον εἰς πειρασμόν; μὴ γένοιτο· οὐ γὰρ αἴτιος τῶν κακῶν ὁ Θεός· ἀλλὰ παρακαλέσομεν αὐτὸν, ἵνα τοῖς πολλοῖς αὐτοῦ οἰκτιρμοῖς μὴ ἐάσῃ ἡμᾶς πειρασθῆναι.—S. GERMAN. Patr. C. P. περὶ τῶν Ἱερουρ.

[o] ——— Pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii
Carior est illis homo quàm sibi. Nos, animorum
Impulsu et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris: at illis
Notum qui pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor.
JUVEN. Sat. x. 349.

[p] Μὴ μοι γένοιτ' ἃ βούλομ', ἀλλ' ἃ συμφέρει.

[q] ——— Rege incolumi, mens omnibus una;
Amisso, rupêre fidem. VIRG. Georg. iv. 212.

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uses as public persons, all that we may and we must pray for; either particularly, for so we may, or in general significations, for so we must at least: "that we may lead a godly, peaceable, and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty;" that is St. Paul's rule, and the prescribed measure and purpose of such prayers. And in this instance of kings, we may pray for defeating all the king's enemies, such as are truly such; and we have no other restraint upon us in this, but that we keep our desires confined within the limits of the end we are commanded; that is, so far to confound the king's enemies, that he may do his duty, and we do ours, and receive the blessing; ever, as much as we can, to distinguish the malice from the person. But if the enemies themselves will not also separate what our intentions distinguish, that is, if they will not return to their duty; then, let the prayers operate as God pleases, we must be zealous for the end of the king's authority and peaceable government. By enemies, I mean rebels or invaders, tyrants and usurpers; for in other wars there are many other considerations, not proper for this place.

13. The next consideration will be concerning the manner; I mean both the manner of our persons, and the manner of our prayers; that is, with what conditions we ought to approach to God, and with what circumstances the prayers may or ought to be performed. The conditions to make our prayers holy and certain to prevail, are: 1. That we live good lives, endeavouring to conform, by holy obedience, to all the Divine commandments. This condition is expressly recorded by St. John: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask of him we shall obtain:"[r] and St. James affirms, that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:"[s] and our blessed Saviour, limiting the confidence of our prayers for forgiveness to our charity and forgiving others, plainly tells us, that the uncharitable and unrighteous person shall not be heard. And the blind man in the gospel understood well what he said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper, and doeth his will, him he heareth."[t] And it was so decreed and resolved a point in the doctrine of their religion, that it was a proverbial saying. And although this discourse of the blind man was of a restrained occasion, and signified, if Christ had been a false prophet, God would not have attested his sermons with the power of miracles; yet in general also he had been taught by David, "If I regard iniquity in my heart[u] the Lord will not hear my prayer." And, therefore, when men "pray in every place," (for so they are commanded,) "let them lift up pure hands, without anger and contention."[x] And indeed, although every sin entertained with a free choice and a full understanding is an obstruction to our prayers; yet the special sin of uncharitableness makes the biggest cloud,[y] and is, in the proper matter of it, an indisposition for us to receive mercy: for he who is softened with apprehension of his own needs of mercy, will be tender-hearted towards his brother; and, therefore, he that hath no bowels here, can have no aptness there to receive, or heartily to hope for mercy. But this rule is to be understood of persons who persevere in the habit and remanent affections of sin; so long as they entertain sin with love, complacency, and joy, they are in a state of enmity with God, and therefore in no fit disposition to receive pardon and the entertainment of friends: but penitent sinners and returning souls, laden and grieved with their heavy pressures, are, next to holy innocents, the aptest persons in the world to be heard in their prayers for pardon; but they are in no further disposition to large favours, and more eminent charities. A sinner, in the beginning of his penance, will be heard for himself, and yet also he needs the prayers of holy persons more signally than others; for he hath but some very few degrees of dispositions to reconciliation: but in prayers of intercession or mediation for others, only holy and very pious persons are fit to be interested. All men, as matter of duty, must pray for all men:[z] but in the great necessities of a prince, of a church or kingdom, or of a family, or in a great danger and calamity to a single person, only a Noah, a David, a Daniel, a Jeremiah, an Enoch, or Job, are fit and proportioned advocates. God so requires holiness in us, that our prayers may be accepted, that he entertains them in several degrees, according to the degrees of our sanctity; to fewer or more purposes, according as we are little or great in the kingdom of heaven. As for those irregular donations of good things which wicked persons ask for and have, they are either no mercies, but instruments of cursing and crime, or else they are designs of grace, intended to convince them of their unworthiness; and so, if they become not instruments of their conversion, they are aggravations of their ruin.

14. Secondly: The second condition I have already explained in the description of the matter of our prayers.[a] For although we may lawfully ask for whatsoever we need, and this leave is consigned to us in those words of our blessed Saviour, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of;" yet, because God's providence walks in the great deep, that is, his footsteps are in the water, and leave no impression; no former act of grace becomes a precedent that he will give us that in kind which then he saw convenient, and therefore gave us, and now he sees to be inconvenient, and therefore does deny. Therefore, in all things, but what are matter of necessary and mingled duty, we must send up our prayers; but humility, mortification, and conformity to the Divine will, must attend for an answer, and bring back, not what the public embassy pretends, but what they have in private instructions to desire; accounting that for the best satisfaction

[r] 1 John iii. 21, 22. [s] James v. 16. [t] John ix. 31.
[u] Psalm lxvi. 18. [x] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[y] Posuisti ut nubem peccatum, ne transeat oratio.—LAM. 5.
[z] Cùm nam is qui displicet ad intercedendum mittitur, irati animus ad deteriora provocatur.—GREGOR. Pastor.

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
Non sumptuosa blandior hostia
Mollivit aversos penates
Farre pio et saliente micâ.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 23.

[a] Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀήκοος θεός.

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which God pleases, not what I have either unnecessarily, or vainly, or sinfully desired.

15. Thirdly: When our persons are disposed by sanctity, and the matter of prayers is hallowed by prudence and religious intendments, then we are bound to entertain a full persuasion and confident hope that God will hear us. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall obtain them,"[b] said our blessed Saviour: and St. James taught from that oracle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God: but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed to and fro:"[c] meaning, that when there is no fault in the matter of our prayers, but that we ask things pleasing to God, and there is no indisposition and hostility in our persons and manners between God and us, then to doubt were to distrust God; for all being right on our parts, if we doubt the issue, the defailance must be on that part, which to suspect were infinite impiety. But after we have done all we can, if, out of humility, and fear that we are not truly disposed, we doubt of the issue, it is a modesty which will not at all discommend our persons, nor impede the event; provided we at no hand suspect either God's power or veracity. Putting trust in God[d] is an excellent advantage to our prayers; "I will deliver him," saith God, "because he hath put his trust in me." And yet distrusting ourselves, and suspecting our own dispositions, as it pulls us back in our actual confidence of the event, so because it abates nothing of our confidence in God, it prepares us to receive the reward of humility, and not to lose the praise of a holy trusting in the Almighty.

16. These conditions are essential: some other there are which are incidents and accessories, but at no hand to be neglected. And the first is, actual or habitual attention to our prayers, which we are to procure with moral and severe endeavours, that we desire not God to hear us when we do not hear ourselves. To which purpose we must avoid, as much as our duty will permit us, multiplicity of cares and exterior employments; for a river cut into many rivulets divides also its strength, and grows contemptible, and apt to be forded by a lamb, and drunk up by a summer sun; so is the spirit of man busied in variety, and divided in itself;[e] it abates its fervour, cools into indifferency, and becomes trifling by its dispersion and inadvertency. Aquinas was once asked, with what compendium a man might best become learned? he answered, By reading of one book: meaning, that an understanding entertained with several objects is intent upon neither, and profits not. And so it is when we pray to God; if the cares of the world intervene, they choke our desires into an indifferency, and suppress the flame into a smoke, and strangle the spirit. But this, being an habitual carelessness and intemperance of spirit, is an enemy to an habitual attention, and therefore is highly criminal, and makes our prayers to be but the labour of the lips, because our desires are lessened by the remanent affections of the world. But besides an habitual attention in our prayers, that is, a desire in general of all that our prayers pretend to in particular, there is also for the accommodation, and to facilitate the access of our prayers, required, that we attend actually to the words or sense of every collect or petition. To this we must contend with prayer, with actual dereliction and seposition of all our other affairs, though innocent and good in other kinds, by a present spirit. And the use of it is, that such attention is an actual conversing with God; it occasions the exercise of many acts of virtue, it increases zeal and fervency, and, by reflection, enkindles love and holy desires. And although there is no rule to determine the degree of our actual attention, and it is ordinarily impossible never to wander with a thought, or to be interrupted with a sudden immission into our spirit in the midst of prayers; yet our duty is, by mortification of our secular desires, by suppression of all our irregular passions, by reducing them to indifferency, by severity of spirit, by enkindling our holy appetites and desires of holy things, by silence, and meditation, and repose, to get as forward in this excellency as we can: to which also we may be very much helped by ejaculatory prayers and short breathings; in which, as, by reason of their short abode upon the spirit, there is less fear of diversion, so also they may so often be renewed, that nothing of the devotion may be unspent, or expire for want of oil to feed and entertain the flame. But the determination of the case of conscience is this: habitual attention is absolutely necessary in our prayers; that is, it is altogether our duty to desire of God all that we pray for, though our mind be not actually attending to the form of words; and, therefore, all worldly desires, that are inordinate, must be rescinded, that we more earnestly attend on God than on the world. He that prays to God to give him the gift of chastity, and yet secretly wishes rather for an opportunity of lust, and desires God would not hear him, (as St. Austin confesses of himself in his youth,) that man sins for want of holy and habitual desires; he prays only with his lips, what he in no sense attests in his heart. 2. Actual attention to our prayers is also necessary, not ever to avoid a sin, but that the present prayer become effectual. He that means

[b] Mark xi. 24. [c] James i. 5, 6.

[d] Chrysantio Deus in aurem hunc versiculum occinuit, Ὁς κε θεοῖς ἐπιπείθηται, μάλα τ' ἴκλυον αὐτοῦ.—EUNAPIUS in Vita Maximi.

Signum futuræ impetrationis est, quando Spiritus Sanctus movet ad petendum cum fiduciâ, et quasi securitate impetrandi. —CASSIAN. Collat. ix. c. 32.

Ecclus. xxxv. 17. Psalm cii. 17.

[e] Non in pluribus sint actus tui.—Ecclus. xi. 10.

Impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusâ mente dividitur ad multa.—S. GREG. Past. p. i. c. 4.

Magnam rem puta, hominem unum agere: præter sapientem nemo unum agit; cæteri multiformes sumus.—SENECA.

Mentem tantæ rei intentam vacare omnibus aliis etiam culpâ carentibus vitiis oportet.—QUINTIL.

Inveni Dilectum meum in lectulo, i. e. in quiete; quia quæ cura implicat, quies explicat.—S. BERNARD. Serm. 1. in Cant.

Quis locus ingenio, nisi cùm se carmine solo
Vexant———
Pectora nostra duas non admittentia curas?
Magnæ mentis opus, nec de lodice paranda
Attonitæ——— JUVENAL. Sat. 7.

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to feast, and to get thanks of God, must invite the poor; and yet he that invites the rich, in that he sins not, though he hath no reward of God for that. So that prayer perishes to which the man gives no degree of actual attention, for the prayer is as if it were not; it is no more than a dream, or an act of custom and order, nothing of devotion; and so accidentally becomes a sin, (I mean there, where, and in what degrees it is avoidable,) by taking God's name in vain. 3. It is not necessary to the prevalency of the prayer, that the spirit actually accompany every clause or word; if it says a hearty Amen, or in any part of it attests the whole, it is such an attention which the present condition of most men will sometimes permit. 4. A wandering of the spirit, through carelessness, or any vice, or inordinate passion, is in that degree criminal as is the cause, and it is heightened by the greatness of the interruption. 5. It is only excused by our endeavours to cure it, and by our after-acts, either of sorrow, or repetition of the prayer, and reinforcing the intention. And certainly, if we repeat our prayer, in which we have observed our spirits too much to wander, and resolve still to repeat it, (as our opportunities permit,) it may in a good degree defeat the purpose of the enemy, when his own arts shall return upon his head, and the wandering of our spirits be made the occasion of a prayer, and the parent of a new devotion. 6. Lastly, according to the degrees of our actual attention, so our prayers are more or less perfect: a present spirit being a great instrument and testimony of wisdom, and apt to many great purposes; and our continual abode with God being a great endearment of our persons, by increasing the affections.

17. Secondly: The second accessory is "intention of spirit," or fervency; such as was that of our blessed Saviour, who prayed to his Father with strong cries and loud petitions, not clamorous in language, but strong in spirit. St. Paul also, when he was pressed with a strong temptation, prayed thrice, that is, earnestly; and St. James affirms this to be of great value and efficacy to the obtaining blessings,[f] "The effectual fervent prayer of a just person avails much;" and Elias, though "a man of like passions," yet by earnest prayer he obtained rain, or drought, according as he desired. Now this is properly produced by the greatness of our desire of heavenly things, our true value and estimate of religion, our sense of present pressures, our fears; and it hath some accidental increases by the disposition of our body, the strength of fancy, and the tenderness of spirit, and assiduity of the dropping of religious discourses; and in all men is necessary to be so great, as that we prefer heaven and religion before the world, and desire them rather, with the choice of our wills and understanding: though there cannot always be that degree of sensual, pungent, or delectable affections towards religion, as towards the desires of nature and sense; yet ever we must prefer celestial objects, restraining the appetites of the world, lest they be immoderate, and heightening the desires of grace and glory, lest they become indifferent, and the fire upon the altar of incense be extinct. But the greater zeal and fervour of desire we have in our prayers, the sooner and the greater will the return of the prayer be, if the prayer be for spiritual objects. For other things our desires must be according to our needs, not by a value derived from the nature of the thing, but the usefulness it is of to us, in order to our greater and better purposes.

18. Thirdly: Of the same consideration it is, that we "persevere and be importunate"[g] in our prayers, by repetition of our desires, and not remitting either our affections or our offices, till God, overcome by our importunity, give a gracious answer. Jacob wrestled with the angel all night, and would not dismiss him till he had given him a blessing: "Let me alone," saith God, as if he felt a pressure and burden lying upon him by our prayers, or could not quit himself, nor depart, unless we give him leave. And since God is detained by our prayers, and we may keep him as long as we please, and that he will not go away till we leave speaking to him; he that will dismiss him till he hath his blessing, knows not the value of his benediction, or understands not the energy and power of a persevering prayer. And to this purpose Christ "spake a parable, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."[h] "Praying without ceasing," St. Paul calls it; that is, with continual addresses, frequent interpellations, never ceasing renewing the request till I obtain my desire. For it is not enough to recommend our desires to God with one hearty prayer, and then forget to ask him any more; but so long as our needs continue, so long, in all times, and upon all occasions, to renew and repeat our desires: and this is "praying continually." Just as the widow did to the unjust judge; she never left going to him, she troubled him every day with her clamorous suit; so must we "pray always," that is, every day, and many times every day, according to our occasions and necessities, or our devotion and zeal, or as we are determined by the customs and laws of a church; never giving over through weariness or distrust, often renewing our desires by a continual succession of devotions, returning at certain and determinate periods. For God's blessings, though they come infallibly, yet not always speedily; saving only that it is a blessing to be delayed, that we may increase our desire, and renew our prayers, and do acts of confidence and patience, and ascertain and increase the blessing when it comes. For we do not more desire to be blessed than God does to hear us importunate for blessing; and he weighs every sigh, and bottles up every tear, and records every prayer, and looks through the cloud, with delight to see us upon our knees, and, when he sees his time, his light breaks through it, and shines upon us. Only

[f] ——Τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον ἁλωτὸν ἐκφεύγει τ' ἀμελούμενον. —SOPHOCL. Œdip.

[g] Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες, Rom. xii. 12. Quod olim erat Levitarum et sacerdotum proprium.

[h] Luke xviii. 1.

Χρὴ ἀδιαλείπτως ἔυχεσθαι τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον θρησκείας.—PROCLUS ad Timæum.

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we must not make our accounts for God according to the course of the sun, but the measures of eternity. He measures us by our needs, and we must not measure him by our impatience. "God is not slack, as some men count slackness," saith the apostle; and we find it so, when we have waited long. All the elapsed time is no part of the tediousness; the trouble of it is past with itself: and for the future, we know not how little it may be; for aught we know, we are already entered into the cloud that brings the blessing. However, pray till it comes: for we shall never miss to receive our desire, if it be holy, or innocent, and safe; or else we are sure of a great reward of our prayers.

19. And in this, so determined, there is no danger of blasphemy, or vain repetitions: for those repetitions are vain which repeat the words, not the devotion, which renew the expression, and not the desire; and he that may pray the same prayer tomorrow which he said to-day, may pray the same at night which he said in the morning, and the same at noon which he said at night, and so in all the hours of prayer, and in all the opportunities of devotion. Christ, in his agony, "went thrice, and said the same words," but he had intervals for repetition; and his need and his devotion pressed him forward: and whenever our needs do so, it is all one if we say the same words or others, so we express our desire, and tell our needs, and beg the remedy. In the same office, and the same hour of prayer, to repeat the same things often hath but few excuses to make it reasonable, and fewer to make it pious: but to think that the prayer is better for such repetition, is the fault which the holy Jesus condemned in the gentiles, who in their hymns would say a name over a hundred times. But in this we have no rule to determine us in numbers and proportion, but right reason.[1] God loves not any words the more for being said often; and those repetitions which are unreasonable in prudent estimation, cannot in any account be esteemed pious. But where a reasonable cause allows the repetition, the same cause that makes it reasonable makes it also proper for devotion. He that speaks his needs, and expresses nothing but his fervour and greatness of desire, cannot be vain or long in his prayers; he that speaks impertinently, that is, unreasonably and without desires, is long, though he speak but two syllables: he that thinks for speaking much to be heard the sooner, thinks God is delighted in the labour of the lips; but when reason is the guide, and piety is the rule, and necessity is the measure, and desire gives the proportion, let the prayer be very long; he that shall blame it for its length, must proclaim his disrelish both of reason and religion, his despite of necessity, and contempt of zeal.

20. As a part and instance of our importunity in prayer, it is usually reckoned and advised, that in cases of great, sudden, and violent need, we corroborate our prayers with a vow of doing something holy and religious in an uncommanded instance, something to which God had not formerly bound our duty, though fairly invited our will;[k] or else, if we choose a duty in which we were obliged, then to vow the doing of it in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the will, with a more fervent repetition of the act, with some more noble circumstance, with a fuller assent of the understanding, or else adding a new promise to our old duty, to make it become more necessary to us, and to secure our duty. In this case, as it requires great prudence and caution in the susception, lest what we piously intend obtain a present blessing and lay a lasting snare; so if it be prudent in the manner, holy in the matter, useful in the consequence, and safe in all the circumstances of the person, it is an endearing us and our prayer to God by the increase of duty and charity, and therefore a more probable way of making our prayers gracious and acceptable. And the religion of vows was not only hallowed by the example of Jacob at Bethel, of Hannah praying for a child, and God hearing her, of David vowing a temple to God, and made regular and safe by the rules and cautions in Moses's law; but left by our blessed Saviour in the same constitution he found it, he having innovated nothing in the matter of vows: and it was practised accordingly in the instance of St. Paul at Cenchrea; of Ananias and Sapphira,[l] who vowed their possessions to the use of the church; and of the widows in the apostolical age, who therefore vowed to remain in the state of widowhood, because concerning them who married after the entry into religion, St. Paul says, "They have broken their first faith:" and such were they of whom our blessed Saviour affirms, "that some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," that is, such who promise to God a life of chastity. And concerning the success of prayer, so seconded with a

[1] Ohe jam desine deos, uxor, gratulando obtundere
Tuam esse inventam gnatam: nisi illos tuo ex ingenio judicas,
Ut nil credas intelligere nisi idem dictum est centies.
TER. Heaut.

Λαλεῖν ἄριστος, ἀδυνατώτατος λέγειν.
Τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦδε τὸν Ὅμηρον λάβε·
Οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν μυρίαδας ἐπῶν γράφει
Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἷς Ὅμηρον εἰρηκεν μακρόν.—PHILEM.
Χωρεῖ τό, τ' εἰπεῖν πολλὰ, καὶ τὰ καίρια.
SOPHOCL. Œdip. 2.

[k] In re trepidâ Tullus Hostilius duodecim vovit salios fanaque Pallori et Pavori.—LIVIUS.
Ego me majore religione quàm quisque fuit ullius voti obstrictum puto.—CICER. ad Atticum.
Solebant autem et vota fieri gratitudinis indicia.
Voveram dulces epulas et album
Libero caprum propè funeratus
Arboris ictu.—HORAT. lib. iii. Od. 8.

Non est meum——ad miseras preces
Decurrere, et votis pacisci,
Ne Cypriæ Tyriæque merces
Addant avaro divitias mari.—Id. lib. iii. Od. 29.
Et læta quidem in præsens omnia: sed benignitati deorum gratiam referendam, ne ritus sacrorum inter ambigua culti per prospera obliterarentur.—TACIT. Ann. lib. xi.

[l] Ananias et Sapphira ideo condemnati, quia post votum abstulerunt quasi sua.—S. HIERON. Ep. 8. ad Demet.
Quid enim est, fidem primam irritam fecerunt? voverunt, et non reddiderunt.—S. AUGUST.
In vita nam æterna est quædam egregia gloria, non omnibus in æternum victuris, sed quibusdam ibi tribuenda; cui consequendæ parùm est liberatum esse à peccatis, nisi aliquid liberatori voveatur, quod non sit criminis non vovisse, sed vovisse ac reddidisse sit laudis.—Idem, de S. Virgin. c. 14.

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udent and religious vow, besides the instances of ripture,[m] we have the perpetual experience and itness of all christendom; and, in particular, our ixon kings have been remarked for this part of portunity in their own chronicles. Oswy[n] got a eat victory with unlikely forces against Penda the ane after his earnest prayer, and an appendant w; and Ceadwalla obtained of God power to re- ver the Isle of Wight from the hands of infidels, ter he had prayed and promised to return the urth part of it to be employed in the proper service God and of religion. This can have no objection suspicion in it among wise and disabused persons; r it can be nothing but an increasing and a re- ewed act of duty, or devotion, or zeal, or charity, id the importunity of prayer, acted in a more tal and real expression.

21. All else that is to be considered concerning rayer, is extrinsical and accidental to it. First: rayer is public, or private; in the communion or ociety of saints, or in our closets: these prayers ave less temptation to vanity; the other have more dvantages of charity, example, fervour, and energy. n public offices we avoid singularity, in the private e avoid hypocrisy: those are of more edification, ese of greater retiredness and silence of spirit; ose serve the needs of all the world in the first ntention, and our own by consequence, these serve ur own needs first, and the public only by a secon- ary intention; these have more pleasure, they ore duty: these are the best instruments of re- entance, where our confessions may be more par- icular, and our shame less scandalous, the other re better for eucharist and instruction, for edifica- ion of the church, and glorification of God.

22. Secondly: The posture of our bodies in rayer had as great variety as the ceremonies and ivilities of several nations came to. The Jews ost commonly prayed standing: so did the harisee and the publican in the temple.[o] So did he primitive christians, in all their greater festivals nd intervals of jubilee; in their penances they neeled. The monks in Cassian sat when they ung the psalter.[p] And in every country, whatso- ver, by the custom of the nation, was a symbol of everence and humility, of silence and attention, of ravity and modesty, that posture they translated to heir prayers. But, in all nations, bowing the head, hat is, a laying down our glory at the feet of God, vas the manner of worshippers: and this was always he more humble and the lower, as their devotion vas higher; and was very often expressed by pros- ration, or lying flat upon the ground; and this all ations did, and all religions. Our deportment ught to be grave, decent, humble, apt for adoration, pt to edify; and when we address ourselves to prayer, not instantly to leap into the office, as the judges of the Areopage into their sentence, "without preface or preparatory affections;" but, considering in what presence we speak, and to what purposes, let us balance our fervour with reverential fear: and, when we have done, not rise from the ground as if we vaulted, or were glad we had done; but, as we begin with desires of assistance, so end with desires of pardon and acceptance, concluding our longer offices with a shorter mental prayer, of more private reflection and reverence, designing to mend what we have done amiss, or to give thanks and proceed if we did well, and according to our powers.

23. Thirdly: In private prayers it is permitted to every man to speak his prayers, or only to think them, which is a speaking to God. Vocal or mental prayer is all one to God, but in order to us they have their several advantages. The sacrifice of the heart, and the calves of the lips, make up a holocaust to God: but words are the arrest of the desires, and keep the spirit fixed, and in less permissions to wander from fancy to fancy; and mental prayer is apt to make the greater fervour, if it wander not: our office is more determined by words; but we then actually think of God, when our spirits only speak. Mental prayer, when our spirits wander, is like a watch standing still, because the spring is down; wind it up again, and it goes on regularly: but in vocal prayer, if the words run on, and the spirit wanders, the clock strikes false, the hand points not to the right hour, because something is in disorder, and the striking is nothing but noise. In mental prayer, we confess God's omniscience; in vocal prayer we call the angels to witness. In the first, our spirits rejoice in God; in the second, the angels rejoice in us. Mental prayer is the best remedy against lightness, and indifferency of affections; but vocal prayer is the aptest instrument of communion. That is more angelical, but yet fittest for the state of separation and glory; this is but human, but it is apter for our present constitution. They have their distinct proprieties, and may be used according to several accidents, occasions, or dispositions.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy and eternal God, who hast commanded us to pray unto thee in all our necessities, and to give thanks unto thee for all our instances of joy and blessing, and to adore thee in all thy attributes and communications, thy own glories and thy eternal mercies; give unto me, thy servant, the spirit of prayer and supplication, that I may understand what is good for me, that I may desire

[m] Eccles. v. 4, 5. Psalm cxxxii. 1, 2. Deut. xxiii. 21. Acts xviii. 18.

[n] Oswy vovit filiam in servitutem religionis et vitam cœlibem, simulque duodecim possessiones ad construendas ædes sacras.

——Reddere victimas
Ædemque votivam memento;
Nos humilem feriemus agnum.—Hor. lib. ii. Od. 17.

[o] Nehem. ix. 5. Mark xi. 25. Luke xviii. 11.

[p] Adoraturi sedeant, dixit Numa Pompilius, apud Plutarch. id est, sint sedato animo. Et καθῆσθαι προσκυνήσοντας dictum proverbialiter ad eundem sensum. Vide S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 5. de Cura pro Mortuis.

Depositisque suis ornamentis pretiosis,
Simplicis et tenuis fruitur velamine vestis,
Inter sacratos noctis venerabilis hymnos
Intrans nudatis templi sacra limina plantis;
Et prono sacram vultu prostratus ad aram,
Corpus frigoreæ sociavit nobile terræ.
S. Roswrid de Hen. Imper. et de Othon.

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regularly, and choose the best things, that I may conform to thy will, and submit to thy disposing, relinquishing my own affections and imperfect choice. Sanctify my heart and spirit, that I may sanctify thy name, and that I may be gracious and accepted in thine eyes. Give me the humility and obedience of a servant, that I may also have the hope and confidence of a son, making humble and confident addresses to the throne of grace; that, in all my necessities, I may come to thee for aids, and may trust in thee for a gracious answer, and may receive satisfaction and supply.

II.

Give me a sober, diligent, and recollected spirit in my prayers, neither choked with cares, nor scattered by levity, nor discomposed by passion, nor estranged from thee by inadvertency, but fixed fast to thee by the indissoluble bands of a great love and a pregnant devotion: and let the beams of thy Holy Spirit, descending from above, enlighten and enkindle it with great fervours, and holy importunity, and unwearied industry; that I may serve thee, and obtain thy blessing by the assiduity and zeal of perpetual religious offices. Let my prayers come before thy presence, and the lifting up of my hands be a daily sacrifice, and let the fires of zeal not go out by night or day; but unite my prayers to the intercession of thy holy Jesus, and to a communion of those offices, which angels and beatified souls do pay before the throne of the Lamb, and at the celestial altar; that, my prayers being hallowed by the merits of Christ, and being presented in the phial of the saints, may ascend thither where thy glory dwells, and from whence mercy and eternal benediction descends upon the church.

III.

Lord, change my sins into penitential sorrow, my sorrow to petition, my petition to eucharist; that my prayers may be consummate in the adorations of eternity, and the glorious participation of the end of our hopes and prayers, the fulness of never-failing charity, and fruition of thee, O holy and eternal God, blessed Trinity, and mysterious Unity, to whom all honour, and worship, and thanks, and confession, and glory, be ascribed for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIII.

Of the third additional Precept of Christ; namely, of the Manner of Fasting.

1. FASTING, being directed in order to other ends, as for mortifying the body, taking away that fuel which ministers to the flame of lust, or else relating to what is past, when it becomes an instrument of repentance, and a part of that revenge which St. Paul affirms to be the effect of "godly sorrow," is to take its estimate for value, and its rules for practice, by analogy and proportion to those ends to which it does co-operate.[a] Fasting before the holy sacrament is a custom of the christian church, and derived to us from great antiquity; and the use of it is, that we might express honour to the mystery, by suffering nothing to enter into our mouths before the symbols. Fasting to this purpose is not an act of mortification, but of reverence and venerable esteem of the instruments of religion, and so is to be understood. And thus also, not to eat or drink before we have said our morning devotions, is esteemed to be a religious decency; and preference of prayer and God's honour before our temporal satisfaction, a symbolical attestation that we esteem the words of God's mouth more than our necessary food. It is like the zeal of Abraham's servant, who would not eat or drink till he had done his errand. And, in pursuance of this act of religion, by the tradition of their fathers, it grew to be a custom of the Jewish nation, that they should not eat bread upon their solemn festivals before the sixth hour; that they might first celebrate the rites of their religious solemnities, before they gave satisfaction to the lesser desires of nature. And, therefore, it was a reasonable satisfaction of the objection made by the assembly against the inspired apostles in Pentecost, "These are not drunk, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day:"[b] meaning, that the day being festival, they knew it was not lawful for any of the nation to break their fast before the sixth hour; for else they might easily have been drunk by the third hour, if they had taken their morning's drink in a freer proportion. And true it is, that religion snatches even at little things; and as it teaches us to observe all the great commandments and significations of duty, so it is not willing to pretermit any thing, which, although by its greatness it cannot, of itself, be considerable, yet, by its smallness, it may become a testimony of the greatness of the affection, which would not omit the least minutes of love and duty. And, therefore, when the Jews were scandalized at the disciples of our Lord, for rubbing the ears of corn on the sabbath day, as they walked through the fields early in the morning, they intended their reproof not for breaking the rest of the day, but the solemnity, for eating before the public devotions were finished. Christ excused it by the necessity and charity of the act; they were hungry, and therefore, having so great need, they might lawfully do it: meaning, that such particles and circumstances of religion are not to be neglected, unless where greater cause of charity or necessity does supervene.

2. But when fasting is in order to greater and more concerning purposes, it puts on more religion,

[a] Per universum orbem mos iste observatur, ut, in honorem tanti sacramenti, in os Christiani priùs Dominicum corpus intraret quàm cæteri cibi.—S. AUG. Ep. 18.

[b] Plebs autem non assentiebatur horum orationibus; et proculdubio exorta fuisset seditio, nisi concionem solvisset sexta hora superveniens, quæ nostris ad prandium vocare solet sabbatis.—JOSEPH. in Vitâ suâ.

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and becomes a duty, according as it is necessary or highly conducing to such ends, to the promoting of which we are bound to contribute all our skill and faculties. Fasting is principally operative to mortification of carnal appetites, to which feasting, and full tables, do minister aptness, and power, and inclinations. "When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled by troops in the harlots' houses."[c] And if we observe all our own vanities, we shall find that, upon every sudden joy, or a prosperous accident, or an opulent fortune, or a pampered body, and highly spirited and inflamed, we are apt to rashness, levities, inconsiderate expressions, scorn and pride, idleness, wantonness, curiosity, niceness, and impatience. But fasting is one of those afflictions which reduces our body to want, our spirits to soberness, our condition to sufferance, our desires to abstinence and customs of denial;[d] and so, by taking off the inundations of sensuality, leaves the enemies within in a condition of being easier subdued. Fasting directly advances towards chastity; and, by consequence and indirect powers, to patience, and humility, and indifference. But then it is not the fast of a day that can do this; it is not an act, but a state of fasting, that operates to mortification. A perpetual temperance and frequent abstinence may abate such proportions of strength and nutriment, as to procure a body mortified and lessened in desires. And thus St. Paul "kept his body under," using severities to it for the taming its rebellions and distemperatures. And St. Jerome reports of St. Hilarion, that when he had fasted much, and used coarse diet, and found his lust too strong for such austerities, he resolved to increase it to the degree of mastery, lessening his diet, and increasing his hardship, till he should rather think of food than wantonness.[e] And many times the fastings of some men are ineffectual, because they promise themselves cure too soon, or make too gentle applications, or put less proportions into their antidotes. I have read of a maiden, that, seeing a young man much transported with her love, and that he ceased not to importune her with all the violent pursuits that passion could suggest, told him, she had made a vow to fast forty days with bread and water, of which she must discharge herself before she could think of corresponding to any other desire; and desired of him, as a testimony of his love, that he also would be a party in the same vow. The young man undertook it, that he might give probation of his love: but, because he had been used to a delicate and nice kind of life, in twenty days he was so weakened, that he thought more of death than love; and so got a cure for his intemperance, and was wittily cozened into remedy. But St. Jerome's counsel in this question is most reasonable, not allowing violent and long fasts, and then returns to an ordinary course; for these are too great changes of diet to consist with health, and too sudden and transient to obtain a permanent and natural effect: but "a belly always hungry," a table never full, a meal little and necessary, no extravagance, no freer repast, this is a state of fasting, which will be found to be of best avail to suppress pungent lusts and rebellious desires.[f] And it were well to help this exercise with the assistances of such austerities which teach patience, and ingenerate a passive fortitude, and accustom us to a despite of pleasures, and which are consistent with our health. For if fasting be left to do the work alone, it may chance either to spoil the body, or not to spoil the lust. Hard lodging, uneasy garments, laborious postures of prayer, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsels; these are in the rank of "bodily exercises," which though, as St. Paul says, of themselves, "they profit little," yet they accustom us to acts of self-denial in exterior instances, and are not useless to the designs of mortifying carnal and sensual lusts. They have "a proportion of wisdom"[g] with these cautions, viz. "in will-worship," that is, in voluntary susception, when they are not imposed as necessary religion;[h] "in humility," that is, without contempt of others that use them not; "in neglecting of the body," that is, when they are done for discipline and mortification, that the flesh, by such handlings and rough usages, become less satisfied, and more despised.

3. As fasting hath respect to the future, so also to the present; and so it operates in giving assistance to prayer. There is a "kind of devil that is not to be ejected but by prayer and fasting," that is, prayer elevated and made intense by a defecate and pure spirit, not laden with the burden of meat and vapours. St. Basil affirms, that there are certain angels deputed by God to minister, and to describe all such in every church who mortify themselves by fasting;[i] as if paleness and a meagre visage were that "mark in the forehead," which the angel observed when he signed the saints in Jerusalem to escape the judgment. Prayer is the wings of the soul,[k] and fasting is the wings of prayer. Tertullian calls it "the nourishment of prayer."[l] But this is a discourse of christian philosophy; and he that chooses to do any act of spirit, or understanding, or attention, after a full meal, will then per-

[c] Jer. v. 7.

[d] Ἐν τῇ κενῇ γαστρὶ τῶν παλῶν ἔρως οὐκ ἔστι· πεινῶσιν ἡ κύπρις πικρά.—ACHÆUS apud Athenæum.

Extraordinarios motus in cippo claudit jejunium.—S. CYP.

Jejunia enim nos contra peccata faciunt fortiores, concupiscentias vincunt, tentationes repellunt, superbiam inclinant, iram mitigant, et omnes bonæ voluntatis affectus ad maturitatem totius virtutis enutriunt.—S. LEO, Serm. 4. de Jejun.

Saginantur pugiles qui xerophagiis invalescunt.—TERTUL. de Jejun.

[e] S. Hieron. in Vita. S. Hilarion.

[f] Parcus cibus et venter semper esuriens triduana jejunia superant.—S. HIERON. Ep. 8. ad Demetriad.

[g] Coloss. ii. 23. Λόγον σοφίας.

[h] Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος, &c. γάμου, καὶ κρεῶν καὶ οἴνου, οὐ δι' ἄσκησιν, ἀλλὰ διὰ βδελυρίαν ἀπέχεται, ἢ καθαιρείσθω.—Can. Apost. 50.

[i] Serm. 5. de Jejun.

[k] Jejunium animæ nostræ alimentum, leves ei pennas producens.—S. BERN. Serm. in Vigil. S. Andreæ.

Ἀκρίδας ἐσθίοντα Ἰωάννην, καὶ πτεροφυήσαντα τὴν ψυχήν, dixit S. Chrysost.

[l] Jejuniis preces alere, lacrymari, et mugire noctes diesque ad Dominum.—TERTUL.

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ceive that abstinence had been the better disposition to any intellectual and spiritual action. And, therefore, the church of God ever joined fasting to their more solemn offices of prayer. The apostles "fasted and prayed when they laid their hands," invocated the Holy Ghost upon Saul and Barnabas.[m] And these also, "when they had prayed with fasting," ordained elders in the churches of Lystra and Iconium.[n] And the vigils of every holy day tell us, that the devotion of the festival is promoted by the fast of the vigils.

4. But when fasting relates to what is past, it becomes an instrument of repentance,[o] it is a punitive and afflictive action, an effect of godly sorrow, a testimony of contrition, "a judging of ourselves, and chastening our bodies, that we be not judged of the Lord." The fast of the Ninevites, and the fast the prophet Joel calls for,[p] and the discipline of the Jews in the rights of expiation, proclaim this usefulness of fasting in order to repentance. And, indeed, it were a strange repentance that had no sorrow in it, and a stranger sorrow that had no affliction; but it were the strangest scene of affliction in the world, when the sad and afflicted person shall eat freely, and delight himself, and to the banquets of a full table serve up the chalice of tears and sorrow, and no bread of affliction.[q] Certainly he that makes much of himself, hath no great indignation against the sinner, when himself is the man. And it is but a gentle revenge and an easy judgment, when the sad sinner shall do penance in good meals, and expiate his sin with sensual satisfaction. So that fasting relates to religion, in all variety and difference of time: it is an antidote against the poison of sensual temptations, an advantage to prayer, and an instrument of extinguishing the guilt and the affections of sin, by judging ourselves, and representing, in a judicatory of our own, even ourselves being judges, that sin deserves condemnation, and the sinner merits a high calamity. Which excellencies I repeat in the words of Baruch the scribe, he that was amanuensis to the prophet Jeremy: "The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, will give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord."[r]

5. But now, as fasting hath divers ends, so also it hath divers laws. If fasting be intended as an instrument of prayer, it is sufficient that it be of that quality and degree that the spirit be clear and the head undisturbed,[s] an ordinary act of fast, an abstinence from a meal, or a deferring it, or a lessening it when it comes, and the same abstinence repeated, according to the solemnity and intendment of the offices. And this is evident in reason, and the former instances, and the practice of the church, dissolving some of her fasts, which were in order only to prayer by noon, and as soon as the great and first solemnity of the day is over. But if fasting be intended as a punitive act, and an instrument of repentance, it must be greater. St. Paul, at his conversion, continued three days without eating or drinking. It must have in it so much affliction as to express the indignation, and to condemn the sin, and to judge the person. And although the measure of this cannot be exactly determined, yet the general proportion is certain; for a greater sin there must be a greater sorrow, and a greater sorrow must be attested with a greater penalty. And Ezra declares his purpose thus: "I proclaimed a fast that we might afflict ourselves before God."[t] Now this is no further required, nor is it in this sense further useful, but that it be a trouble to the body, an act of judging and severity; and this is to be judged by proportion to the sorrow and indignation, as the sorrow is to the crime. But this affliction needs not to leave any remanent effect upon the body; but such transient sorrow, which is consequent to the abstinence of certain times designed for the solemnity, is sufficient as to this purpose. Only it is to be renewed often, as our repentance must be habitual and lasting; but it may be commuted with other actions of severity and discipline, according to the customs of a church, or the capacity of the persons, or the opportunity of circumstances. But if the fasting be intended for mortification, then it is fit to be more severe and medicinal, by continuance, and quantity, and quality. To repentance, total abstinences without interruption, that is, during the solemnity, short and sharp, are most apt: but towards the mortifying a lust, those sharp and short fasts are not reasonable; but a diet of fasting, an habitual subtraction of nutriment from the body, a long and lasting austerity, increasing in degrees, but not violent in any. And in this sort of fasting we must be highly careful we do not violate a duty by fondness of an instrument; and because we intend fasting as a help to mortify the lust, let it not destroy the body, or retard the spirit, or violate our health, or impede us in any part of our necessary duty. As we must be careful that our fast be reasonable, serious, and apt to the end of our designs; so we must be curious, that by helping one duty uncertainly, it do not certainly destroy another. Let us do it like honest persons and just, without artifices and hypocrisy; but let us also do it like wise persons, that it be neither in itself unreasonable, nor, by accident, become criminal.

6. In the pursuance of this discipline of fasting, the doctors of the church and guides of souls have not unusefully prescribed other annexes and circumstances; as that all the other acts of deport-

[m] Acts xiii. 3. [n] Acts xiv. 23.

[o] Μετάνοια χωρὶς νηστείας ἀργή.—S. Basil.

[p] Joel ii. 15. Levit. xxiii. 27, &c. Isa. xxii. 12.

[q] Οὐ σιτίον, οὐ πότον ἔξεστι προσενίγκεσθαι.—Philo. Pœnitentia de ipso quoque habitu ac victu mandat, sacco et cineri incubare, corpus sordibus obscurare, animium mœroribus dejicere, atque illa quæ peccavit tristi tractatione mutare. —Tertul. de Pœnit. c. 9.

[r] Baruch ii. 18.

Lautè edere et meraciùs bibere rusticitatis erat apud veteres. Unde ἐπισκυθίζειν, et θρηϊκίη ἄμυστις, apud Callimachum: et in proverbium abiit, ἡ πλησμονὴ τῶν βαρβάρων· et apud Theophrastum, δεινῶς φαγεῖν, καὶ ζωρότερον πιεῖν, rusticorum esse notatur, Περὶ ἀγροικίας.

[s] Παχεῖα γαστὴρ λεπτὸν οὐ τίκτει νόον.

[t] Ezra viii. 21. Dan. x. 12. Psalm xxxv. 13. Levit. xvi. 29–31. Isa. lviii. 3.

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ment be symbolical to our fasting. If we fast for mortification, let us entertain nothing of temptation, or semblance to invite a lust; no sensual delight, no freer entertainments of our body, to countenance or corroborate a passion. If we fast that we may pray the better, let us remove all secular thoughts for that time; for it is vain to alleviate our spirits of the burden of meat and drink, and to depress them with the loads of care. If for repentance we fast, let us be most curious that we do nothing contrary to the design of repentance, knowing that a sin is more contrary to repentance than fasting is to sin; and it is the greatest stupidity in the world to do that thing which I am now mourning for, and for which I do judgment upon myself. And let all our actions also pursue the same design, helping one instrument with another, and being so zealous for the grace, that we take in all the aids we can to secure the duty. For to fast from flesh, and to eat delicate fish; not to eat meat, but to drink rich wines freely; to be sensual in the objects of our other appetites, and restrained only in one; to have no dinner, and that day to run on hunting, or to play at cards; are not handsome instances of sorrow, or devotion, or self-denial. It is best to accompany our fasting with the retirements of religion, and the enlargements of charity, giving to others what we deny to ourselves. These are proper actions: and although not in every instance necessary to be done at the same time, (for a man may give his alms in other circumstances, and not amiss,) yet, as they are very convenient and proper to be joined in that society, so to do any thing contrary to religion or to charity, to justice or to piety, to the design of the person or the design of the solemnity, is to make that become a sin which, of itself, was no virtue, but was capable of being hallowed by the end and the manner of its execution.

7. This discourse hath hitherto related to private fasts, or else to fasts indefinitely. For, what rules soever every man is bound to observe in private, for fasting piously, the same rules the governors of a church are to intend, in their public prescription. And when once authority hath intervened, and proclaimed a fast, there is no new duty incumbent upon the private, but that we obey the circumstances, letting them to choose the time and the end for us: and though we must prevaricate neither, yet we may improve both; we must not go less, but we may enlarge; and when fasting is commanded only for repentance, we may also use it to prayers, and to mortification. And we must be curious that we do not obey the letter of the prescription, and violate the intention, but observe all that care in public fasts which we do in private; knowing that our private ends are included in the public, as our persons are in the communion of saints, and our hopes in the common inheritance of sons: and see that we do not fast in order to a purpose, and yet use it so as that it shall be to no purpose. Whosoever so fasts as that it be not effectual in some degree towards the end, or so fasts that it be accounted, of itself, a duty and an act of religion, without order to its proper end, makes his act vain because it is unreasonable, or vain because it is superstitious.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesu, who didst, for our sake, fast forty days and forty nights, and hast left to us thy example, and thy prediction, that, in the days of thy absence from us, we, thy servants, and children of thy bride-chamber, should fast; teach us to do this act of discipline so, that it may become an act of religion. Let us never be like Esau, valuing a dish of meat above a blessing; but let us deny our appetites of meat and drink, and accustom ourselves to the yoke, and subtract the fuel of our lusts, and the incentives of all our unworthy desires: that, our bodies being free from the intemperances of nutriment, and our spirits from the load and pressure of appetite, we may have no desires but of thee; that our outward man, daily decaying by the violence of time, and mortified by the abatements of its too free and unnecessary support; it may, by degrees, resign to the entire dominion of the soul, and may pass from vanity to piety, from weakness to ghostly strength, from darkness and mixtures of impurity to great transparences and clarity, in the society of a beatified soul, reigning with thee, in the glories of eternity, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIV.

Of the Miracles which Jesu wrought, for Confirmation of his Doctrine, during the whole Time of his Preaching.

1. WHEN Jesus had ended his sermon on the mount, he descended into the valleys, to consign his doctrine, by the power of miracles, and the excellency of a rare example; that he might not lay a yoke upon us which himself also would not bear. But as he became "the author," so also "the finisher of our faith;" what he designed in proposition, he represented in his own practice;[a] and by these acts made a new sermon, teaching all prelates and spiritual persons to descend from their eminence of contemplation, and the authority and business of their discourses, to apply themselves to do more material and corporal mercies to afflicted persons, and to preach by example, as well as by their homilies. For he that teaches others well, and practises contrary, is like a fair candlestick, bearing a goodly and bright taper, which sends forth light to all the house, but round about itself there is a shadow and circumstant darkness. The prelate should be "the

[a] Nec monstravit tantùm, sed etiam præcessit, ne quis difficultatis gratiâ iter virtutis horreret.—LACTANT.

Ἅπαντές ἐσμεν εἰς τὸ νουθετεῖν σοφοί,
Αὐτοὶ δ' ἁμαρτάνοντες οὐ γινώσκομεν.—MENAND.

Ennodius in vitâ Epiphanii: Pingebat actibus suis paginam quam legisset; et quod liber docuerat, vita signabat.

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light," consuming and spending itself, to enlighten others; scattering his rays round about, from the angles of contemplation, and from the corners of practice; but himself always tending upwards, till at last he expires into the element of love and celestial fruition.

2. But the miracles which Jesus did, were next to infinite; and every circumstance of action that passed from him, as it was intended for mercy, so also for doctrine; and the impotent or diseased persons were not more cured than we instructed. But, because there was nothing in the actions, but what was a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in his sermons, in the sermon we must look after our duty, and look upon his practice as a verification of his doctrine, and instrumental also to other purposes. Therefore, in general, if we consider his miracles, we shall see that he did design them to be a compendium of faith and charity.[b] For he chose to instance his miracles in actions of mercy, that all his powers might especially determine upon bounty and charity; and yet his acts of charity were so miraculous, that they became an argument of the divinity of his person and doctrine. Once he turned water into wine, which was a mutation by a supernatural power, in a natural suscipient, where a person was not the subject, but an element; and yet this was done to rescue the poor bridegroom from affront and trouble, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. All the rest, (unless we except his walking upon the waters,) during his natural life, were actions of relief and mercy, according to the design of God, manifesting his power most chiefly in showing mercy.

3. The great design of miracles was to prove his mission from God, to convince the world of sin, to demonstrate his power of forgiving sins, to endear his precepts; and that his disciples "might believe in him, and that believing they might have life through his name."[c] For he, to whom God, by doing miracles gave testimony from heaven, must needs be sent from God; and he who had received power to restore nature, and to create new organs, and to extract from incapacities, and from privations to reduce habits, was Lord of nature, and, therefore, of all the world. And this could not but create great confidence in his disciples, that himself would verify those great promises, upon which he established his law. But that the argument of miracles might be infallible, and not apt to be reproved, we may observe its eminence by divers circumstances of probability, heightened up to the degree of moral demonstration.

4. First: The holy Jesus "did miracles which no man" (before him, or at that time) "ever did."[d] Moses smote the rock, and water gushed out; but he could not turn that water into wine. Moses cured no diseases, by the empire of his will, or the word of his mouth; but Jesus "healed all infirmities." Elisha raised a dead child to life; but Jesus raised one who had been dead four days, and buried, and corrupted. Elias, and Samuel, and all the prophets, and the succession of the high priests in both the temples, put all together, never did so many or so great miracles as Jesus did. He cured leprous persons by his touch; he restored sight to the blind, who were such not by any intervening accident, hindering the act of the organ, but by nature, who were "born blind," and whose eyes had not any natural possibility to receive sight; who could never see without creating of new eyes for them, or some integral part co-operating to vision; and, therefore, the miracle was wholly an effect of a Divine power, for nature did not at all co-operate; or, that I may use the elegant expression of Dante, it was such

> ——— à cui natura
> Non scaldò ferro mai, ne battè ancude,

for which nature never did heat the iron, nor beat the anvil. He made crooked limbs become straight, and the lame to walk; and habitual diseases and inveterate, of eighteen years' continuance, (and once of thirty-eight,) did disappear at his speaking, like darkness at the presence of the sun. He cast out devils, who, by the majesty of his person, were forced to confess and worship him; and yet, by his humility and restraints, were commanded silence, or to go whither he pleased; and without his leave, all the powers of hell were as infirm and impotent as a withered member, and were not able to stir. He raised three dead persons to life; he fed thousands of people, with two small fishes and five little barley cakes: and, as a consummation of all power and all miracles, he foretold, and verified it, that himself would rise from the dead after three days' sepulture. But when himself had told them, he did miracles "which no man else ever did," they were not able to reprove his saying with one single instance; but the poor blind man found him out one instance, to verify his assertion: "It was yet never heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

5. Secondly: The scene of his preaching and miracles was Judea, which was the pale of the church, and God's enclosed portion, "of whom were the oracles and the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come," and to whom he was promised. Now, since these miracles were for verification of his being the Christ, the promised Messias, they were then to be esteemed a convincing argument; when all things else concurring, as the predictions of the prophets, the synchronisms, and the capacity of his person, he brought miracles to attest himself to be the person so declared and signified. God would not suffer his people to be abused by miracles, nor from heaven would speak so loud, in testimony of any thing contrary to his own will and purposes. They to whom he gave the oracles, and the law, and the predictions of the Messias, and declared beforehand, that at the coming of the Messias "the blind should see, the lame should walk, and the deaf should hear, the lepers should be cleansed, and to the poor the gospel should be preached,"[e] could not expect a greater conviction for acceptation of a person, than, when

[b] Acts x. 38. [c] John xx. 31. x. 38. v. 36. [d] John xv. 24. [e] Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Matt. xi. 5.

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that happened, which God himself, by his prophets, had consigned as his future testimony; and if there could have been deception in this, it must needs have been inculpable in the deceived person, to whose error a Divine prophecy had been both nurse and parent. So that, taking the miracles Jesus did, in that conjunction of circumstances, done to that people to whom all their oracles were transmitted by miraculous verifications; miracles so many, so great, so accidentally, and yet so regularly, to all comers and necessitous persons that prayed for it, after such predictions and clearest prophecies, and these prophecies owned by himself, and sent, by way of symbol and mysterious answer, to John the Baptist, to whom he described his office, by recounting his miracles in the words of the prediction; there cannot be any fallibility or weakness pretended to this instrument of probation, applied, in such circumstances, to such a people, who, being dear to God, would be preserved from invincible deceptions; and, being commanded by him to expect the Messias in such an equipage of power and demonstration of miracles, were, therefore, not deceived, nor could they, because they were bound to accept it.

6. Thirdly: So that now we must not look upon these miracles as an argument primarily intended to convince the gentiles, but the Jews. It was a high probability to them also, and so it was designed also, in a secondary intention; but it could not be an argument to them so certain, because it was destitute of two great supporters. For they neither believed the prophets, foretelling the Messias to be such, nor yet saw the miracles done; so that they had no testimony of God beforehand, and were to rely upon human testimony for the matter of fact; which, because it was fallible, could not infer a necessary conclusion, alone and of itself, but it put on degrees of persuasion, as the testimony had degrees of certainty or universality; that they also "which see not, and yet have believed," might "be blessed." And, therefore, Christ sent his apostles to convert the gentiles, and supplied, in their case, what in his own could not be applicable, or so concerning them. For he sent them to do miracles in the sight of the nations, that they might not doubt the matter of fact; and prepared them also with a prophecy, foretelling that they should do the same, and greater miracles than he did. They had greater prejudices to contest against, and a more unequal distance from belief, and aptnesses to credit such things; therefore it was necessary that the apostles should do greater miracles, to remove the greater mountains of objection. And they did so; and by doing it in pursuance and testimony of the ends of Christ and christianity, verified the fame and celebrity of their Master's miracles, and represented to all the world his power, and his veracity, and his Divinity.

7. Fourthly: For when the holy Jesus appeared upon the stage of Palestine, all things were quiet, and at rest from prodigy and wonder; nay, John the Baptist, who, by his excellent sanctity and austerities, had got great reputation to his person and doctrines, yet "did no miracle;" and no man else did any, save some few exorcists among the Jews cured some demoniacs and distracted people. So that, in this silence, a prophet, appearing with signs and wonders, had nothing to lessen the arguments, no opposite of like power, or appearances of a contradictory design. And, therefore, it persuaded infinitely, and was certainly operative upon all persons, whose interest and love of the world did not destroy the piety of their wills, and put their understanding into fetters. And Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, being convinced, said, "We know that thou art a doctor sent from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, unless God be with him."[f] But when the devil saw what great affections and confidences these miracles of Christ had produced in all persons, he too late strives to lessen the argument, by playing an after-game; and weakly endeavours to abuse vicious persons, (whose love to their sensual pleasures was of power to make them take any thing for argument to retain them,) by such low, few, inconsiderable, uncertain, and suspicious instances, that it grew to be the greatest confirmation and extrinsical argument in behalf of religion, that either friend or foe, upon his own industry, could have represented. Such as were the making an image speak, or fetching fire from the clouds; and that the images of Diana, Cyndias, and Vesta, among the Jasiæans, would admit no rain to wet them, or cloud to darken them; and that the bodies of them who entered into the temple of Jupiter, in Arcadia, would cast no shadow:[g] which things Polybius himself, one of their own superstition, laughs at, as impostures, and says they were no way to be excused, unless the pious purpose of the inventors did take off from the malice of the lie. But the miracles of Jesus were confessed, and wondered at, by Josephus; were published to all the world by his own disciples, who never were accused, much less convicted, of forgery; and they were acknowledged by Celsus[h] and Julian,[i] the greatest enemies of Christ.

8. But further yet, themselves gave it out, that one Caius was cured of his blindness by Æsculapius, and so was Valerius Aper; and at Alexandria, Vespasian cured a man of the gout by treading upon his toes, and a blind man with spittle. And when Adrian, the emperor, was sick of a fever, and would have killed himself, it is said, two blind persons were cured by touching him, whereof one of them told him that he also should recover.[k] But although Vespasian, by the help of Apollonius Tyaneus, who was his familiar, who also had the devil to be his, might do any thing within the power of nature, or by permission might do much more; yet, besides that this was of an uncertain and less credible report, if it

[f] John iii. 2.

[g] Lib. xvi. Hist.

[h] Ἐνομίσατε αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ χωλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἐθεράπευσε; dixit Celsus apud Origen.

[i] Εἰ μή τις οἴεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἰασάσθαι, καὶ δαιμονιῶντας ἐξορκίζειν, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι, &c.—JULIAN. apud Cyril. lib. vi.

[k] Spartianus in Adriano; qui addit, Marium Maximum dixisse hæc facta fuisse per simulationem.

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had been true, it was also infinitely short of what Christ did, and was a weak, silly imitation, and usurping of the argument, which had already prevailed upon the persuasions of men, beyond all possibility of confutation. And for that of Adrian to have reported it is enough to make it ridiculous; and it had been a strange power to have cured two blind persons, and yet be so unable to help himself, as to attempt to kill himself, by reason of anguish, impatience, and despair.

9. Fifthly: When the Jews and Pharisees believed not Christ for his miracles, and yet perpetually called for a sign, he refused to give them a sign, which might be less than their prejudice, or the persuasions of their interest; but gave them one, which alone is greater than all the miracles which ever were done, or said to be done, by any antichrist, or the enemies of the religion put all together: a miracle which could have no suspicion of imposture; a miracle without instance, or precedent, or imitation: and that is, Jesus's lying in the grave three days and three nights, and then rising again, and appearing to many, and conversing for forty days together; giving probation of his rising, of the verity of his body; making a glorious promise, which at Pentecost was verified, and speaking such things, which became precepts and parts of the law for ever after.

10. Sixthly: I add two things more to this consideration. First, that the apostles did such miracles, which were infinitely greater than the pretensions of any adversary, and inimitable by all the powers of man or darkness. They raised the dead, they cured all diseases by their very shadow passing by, and by the touch of garments; they converted nations, they foretold future events, they themselves spake with tongues, and they gave the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands, which enabled others to speak languages which immediately before they understood not, and to cure diseases, and to eject devils. Now, supposing miracles to be done by gentile philosophers and magicians after; yet when they fall short of these in power, and yet teach a contrary doctrine, it is a demonstration that it is a lesser power, and, therefore, the doctrine not of Divine authority and sanction. And it is remarkable, that, among all the gentiles, none ever reasonably pretended to a power of casting out devils. For the devils could not get so much by it, as things then stood: and besides, in whose name should they do it, who worshipped none but devils and false gods? which is too violent presumption, that the devil was the architect in all such buildings. And when the seven sons of Sceva,[l] who was a Jew, (amongst whom it was sometimes granted to cure demoniacs,) offered to exorcise a possessed person, the devil would by no means endure it, but beat them for their pains. And although it might have been for his purpose to have enervated the reputation of St. Paul, and, by a voluntary cession, equalled St. Paul's enemies to him, yet either the devil could not go out but at the command of a christian, or else to have gone out would have been a disservice and ruin to his kingdom; either of which declares, that the power of casting out devils is a testimony of God, and a probation of the divinity of a doctrine, and a proper argument of christianity.

11. Seventhly: But, besides this, I consider, that the holy Jesus, having first possessed, upon just title, all the reasonableness of human understanding by his demonstration of a miraculous power, in his infinite wisdom knew that the devil would attempt to gain a party by the same instrument, and therefore so ordered it, that the miracles which should be done, or pretended to, by the devil, or any of the enemies of the cross of Christ, should be a confirmation of christianity, not do it disservice: for he foretold that antichrist and other enemies "should come in prodigies, and lying wonders and signs." Concerning which, although it may be disputed whether they were truly miracles, or mere deceptions and magical pretences; yet, because they were such which the people could not discern from miracles really such, therefore it is all one, and in this consideration they are to be supposed such: but, certainly, he that could foretell such a future contingency, or such a secret of predestination, was able also to know from what principle it came; and we have the same reason to believe that antichrist shall do miracles to evil purposes, as that he shall do any at all; he that foretold us of the man, foretold us also of the imposture, and commanded us not to trust him. And it had been more likely for antichrist to prevail upon christians by doing no miracles, than by doing any: for if he had done none, he might have escaped without discovery; but by doing miracles, as he verified the wisdom and prescience of Jesus, so he declared to all the church that he was the enemy of their Lord, and therefore less likely to deceive: for which reason it is said, that "he shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect;" that is therefore not possible, because that by which he insinuates himself to others, is by the elect, the church and chosen of God, understood to be his sign and mark of discovery, and a warning. And, therefore, as the prophecies of Jesus were an infinite verification of his miracles, so also this prophecy of Christ concerning antichrist disgraces the reputation and faith of the miracles he shall act. The old prophets foretold of the Messias, and of his miracles of power and mercy, to prepare for his reception and entertainment: Christ alone, and his apostles from him, foretold of antichrist, and that he should come in all miracles of deception and lying; that is, with true or false miracles to persuade a lie: and this was to prejudice his being accepted, according to the law of Moses.[m] So that, as all that spake of Christ, bade us believe him for the miracles; so all that foretold of antichrist, bade us disbelieve him the rather for his: and the reason of both is the same, because the mighty and "surer word of prophecy," as St. Peter calls it, being the greatest testimony in the world of a Divine principle, gives authority, or reprobates, with the same power. They who are the predestinate of God, and they that are the *præsciti*, the foreknown and marked people, must

[l] Acts xix.

[m] Deut. xiii. 1–3.

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needs stand or fall to the Divine sentence; and such must this be acknowledged: for no enemy of the cross, not the devil himself, ever foretold such a contingency, or so rare, so personal, so voluntary, so unnatural an event, as this of the great antichrist.

12. And thus the holy Jesus, having showed forth the treasures of his Father's wisdom, in revelations and holy precepts, and, upon the stock of his Father's greatness, having dispensed and demonstrated great power in miracles, and these being instanced in acts of mercy, he mingled the glories of heaven to transmit them to earth, to raise us up to the participations of heaven: he was pleased, by healing the bodies of infirm persons, to invite their spirits to his discipline, and by his power to convey healing, and by that mercy, to lead us into the treasures of revelation; that both bodies and souls, our wills and understandings, by Divine instruments, might be brought to Divine perfections in the participations of a Divine nature. It was a miraculous mercy that God should look upon us in our blood, and a miraculous condescension that his Son should take our nature: and even this favour we could not believe without many miracles: and so contrary was our condition to all possibilities of happiness, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in miracle, we had perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. And now it would be but reasonable, that, since God, for our sakes, hath rescinded so many laws of natural establishment, we also, for his, and for our own, would be content to do violence to those natural inclinations, which are also criminal when they derive into action. Every man living in the state of grace is a perpetual miracle, and his passions are made reasonable, as his reason is turned to faith, and his soul to spirit, and his body to a temple, and earth to heaven; and less than this will not dispose us to such glories, which, being the portion of saints and angels, and the nearest communications with God, are infinitely above what we see, or hear, or understand.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, who didst receive great power, that by it thou mightest convey thy Father's mercies to us, impotent and wretched people; give me grace to believe that heavenly doctrine, which thou didst ratify with arguments from above, that I may fully assent to all those mysterious truths which integrate that doctrine and discipline, in which the obligations of my duty, and the hopes of my felicity, are deposited. And to all those glorious verifications of thy goodness and thy power add also this miracle, that I, who am stained with leprosy of sin, may be cleansed, and my eyes may be opened, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law; and raise thou me up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that I may for ever walk in the land of the living, abhorring the works of death and darkness; that as I am, by the miraculous mercy, partaker of the first, so also I may be accounted worthy of the second resurrection: and as by faith, hope, charity, and obedience, I receive the fruit of thy miracles in this life, so, in the other, I may partake of thy glories, which is a mercy above all miracles. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief: and grant that no indisposition or incapacity of mine may hinder the wonderful operations of thy grace; but let it be thy first miracle to turn my water into wine, my barrenness into fruitfulness, my aversations from thee into unions and intimate adhesions to thy infinity, which is the fountain of mercy and power. Grant this for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of those glorious attributes, in which thou hast revealed thyself and thy Father's excellencies to the world, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

ΆΓΙΟΣ ΙΣΧΥΡΟΣ.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY FRANCES,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

SINCE the Divine Providence hath been pleased to bind up the great breaches of my little fortune, by your charity and nobleness of a religious tenderness, I account it an excellent circumstance and handsomeness of condition, that I have the fortune of St. Athanasius, to have my persecution relieved and comforted by an honourable and excellent lady; and I have nothing to return for this honour done to me, but to do as the poor paralytics and infirm people in the gospel did, when our blessed Saviour cured them; they went and told it to all the country, and made the vicinage full of the report, as themselves were of health and joy. And, although I know the modesty of your person and religion had rather do favours than own them, yet give me leave to draw aside the curtain and retirement of your charity; for I had rather your virtue should blush, than my unthankfulness make me ashamed. Madam, I intended by this address, not only to return you spirituals for your temporals, but to make your noble usages of me and mine to become, like your other charities, productive of advantages to the standers by. For, although the beams of the sun, reflected from a marble, return not home to the body and fountain of light; yet they that walk below, feel the benefit of a doubled heat: so whatever reflections or returns of your favours I can make, although they fall short of what your worth does most reasonably challenge, and can proceed but towards you with forward desires and distant approaches; yet I am desirous to believe, that those who walk between us, may receive assistances from this intercourse, and the following papers may be auxiliary to the enkindling of their piety, as to the confirming and establishing yours. For, although the great prudence of your most noble lord, and the modesties of your own temperate and sweeter dispositions, become the great endearments of virtue to you; yet, because it is necessary that you make religion the business of your life, I thought it not an impertinent application, to express my thankfulness to your Honour, by that which may best become my duty and my gratitude, because it may do you the greatest service. Madam, I must beg your pardon, that I have opened the sanctuary of your retired virtues; but I was obliged to publish the endearments and favours of your noble lord and yourself, towards me and my relatives: for as your hands are so clasped, that one ring is the ligature of them both; so I have found emanations from that conjuncture of hands, with a consent so forward and apt, that nothing can satisfy for my obligations, but by being in the greatest eminency of thankfulness and humility of person,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most obliged,

And most humble Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY ALICE,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

BY the Divine Providence, which disposes all things wisely and charitably, you are, in the affections of your noblest lord, successor to a very dear and most excellent person, and designed to fill up those offices of piety to her dear pledges, which the haste which God made to glorify and secure her would not permit her to finish. I have much ado to refrain from telling great stories of her wisdom, piety, judgment, sweetness, and religion; but that it would renew the wound, and make our sins bleed afresh, at the memory of that dear saint: and we hope that much of the storm of the Divine anger is over, because he hath repaired the breach by sending you, to go on upon her account, and to give countenance and establishment to all those graces, which were warranted and derived from her example. Madam, the nobleness of your family, your education, and your excellent principles, your fair dispositions, and affable comportment, have not only made all your servants confident of your worthiness and great virtues, but have disposed you so highly and necessarily towards an active and a zealous religion, that we expect it should grow to the height of a great example; that you may draw others after you, as the eye follows the light, in all the angles of its retirement, or open stages of its publication. In order to this I have chosen your Honour into a new relation, and have endeared you to this instrument of piety; that if you will please to do it countenance, and employ it in your counsels and pious offices, it may minister to your appetites of religion; which, as they are already fair and prosperous, so they may swell up to a vastness large enough to entertain all the secrets and pleasures of religion: that so you may add to the blessings and prosperities, which already dwell in that family where you are now fixed, new title to more, upon the stock of all those promises, which have secured and entailed felicities upon such persons who have no vanities, but very many virtues. Madam, I could not do you any service, but by doing myself this honour, to adorn my book with this fairest title and inscription of your name. You may observe, but cannot blame, my ambition; so long as it is instanced in a religious service, and means nothing but this, that I may signify how much I honour that person, who is designed to bring new blessings to that family, which is so honourable in itself, and, for so many reasons, dear to me. Madam, upon that account, besides the stock of your own worthiness, I am

Your Honour's most humble

And obedient Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

SECTION XIII.

Of the Second Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. WHEN the first year of Jesus, the year of peace, and undisturbed preaching, was expired, "there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."[a] This feast was the second Passover he kept after he began to preach;[b] not the feast of Pentecost, or Tabernacles, both which were past before Jesus came last from Judea: whither when he was now come, he finds an "impotent person lying at the pool of Bethesda, waiting till the angel should move the waters, after which, whosoever first stepped in was cured of his infirmity." The poor man had waited thirty-eight years, and still was prevented, by some other of the hospital that needed a physician. But Jesus, seeing him, had pity on him, cured him, and bade him "take up his bed and walk." This cure happened to be wrought "upon the sabbath," for which the Jews were so moved with indignation, that they "thought to slay him:" and their anger was enraged by his calling himself "the Son of God," and "making himself equal with God."

[a] John v. 1, &c

[b] Iren. lib. ii. c. 10.

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2. Upon occasion of this offence, which they snatched at before it was ministered, Jesus discourses[c] upon "his mission, and derivation of his authority from the Father; of the union between them, and the excellent communications of power, participation of dignity, delegation of judicature, reciprocations and reflections of honour from the Father to the Son, and back again to the Father. He preaches of life and salvation to them that believe in him; prophesies of the resurrection of the dead, by the efficacy of the voice of the Son of God; speaks of the day of judgment, the differing conditions after, of salvation and damnation respectively; confirms his words and mission by the testimony of John the Baptist, of Moses, and the other scriptures, and of God himself." And still the scandal rises higher: for "in the second sabbath[d] after the first," that is, in the first day of unleavened bread, which happened the next day after the weekly Sabbath, the disciples of Jesus pull ripe ears of corn, rub them in their hands, and eat them, to satisfy their hunger; for which he offered satisfaction to their scruples, convincing them, that works of necessity are to be permitted, even to the breach of a positive temporary constitution; and that works of mercy are the best serving of God, upon any day whatsoever, or any part of the day, that is vacant to other offices, and proper for a religious festival.

3. But when neither reason nor religion would give them satisfaction, but that they went about to kill him, he withdrew himself from Jerusalem, and returned to Galilee; whither the scribes and Pharisees followed him, observing his actions, and whether or not he would prosecute that which they called profanation of their sabbath, by doing acts of mercy upon that day. He still did so: for, entering into one of the synagogues of Galilee upon the sabbath, Jesus saw a man (whom St. Jerome reports to have been a mason) coming to Tyre, and complaining that his hand was withered,[e] and desiring help of him, that he might again be restored to the use of his hand, lest he should be compelled, with misery and shame, to beg his bread. Jesus restored his hand as whole as the other, in the midst of all those spies and enemies. Upon which act, being confirmed in their malice, the Pharisees went forth and joined with the Herodians, (a sect of people who said Herod was the Messias, because, by the decree of the Roman senate, when the sceptre departed from Judah, he was declared king,[f]) and both together took counsel how they might kill him.

4. Jesus therefore departed again to the seacoast, and his companies increased as his fame; for he was now followed by new "multitudes from Galilee, from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond Jordan, from about Tyre and Sidon;" who, hearing the report of his miraculous power, to cure all diseases by the word of his mouth, or the touch of his hand, or the handling his garment, came with their ambulatory hospital of their sick and possessed; and they pressed on him but to touch him, and were all immediately cured: the devils confessing publicly that he was "the Son of God," till they were upon all such occasions restrained, and compelled to silence.

5. But now Jesus, having commanded a ship to be in readiness against any inconvenience or troublesome pressures of the multitude, "went up into a mountain to pray, and continued in prayer all night," intending to make the first ordination of apostles; which the next day he did, choosing out of the number of his disciples these twelve to be apostles:[g] Simon Peter and Andrew; James and John, the sons of thunder; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas: James, the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Zelot; Judas, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot. With these, descending from the mountain to the plain, he repeated the same sermon, or much of it, which he had before preached in the first beginning of his prophesyings; that he might publish his gospel to these new auditors, and also more particularly inform his apostles in "the doctrine of the kingdom:" for now, because he "saw Israel scattered like sheep having no shepherd," he did purpose to send these twelve abroad, to preach repentance and the approximation of the kingdom; and therefore first instructed them in the mysterious parts of his holy doctrine, and gave them also particular instructions together with their temporary commission for that journey.

6. "For Jesus 'sent them out by two and two, giving them power over unclean spirits,' and to heal all manner of sickness and diseases; telling them they were 'the light,' and 'the eyes,' and 'the salt of the world,' so intimating their duties of diligence, holiness, and incorruption; giving them in charge to preach the gospel, to dispense their power and miracles freely, as they had received it, to anoint sick persons with oil, not to enter into any Samaritan town, but to 'go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' to provide no *viaticum* for their journeys, but to put themselves upon the religion and piety of their proselytes: he arms them against persecutions, gives them leave to fly the storm from city to city, promises them the assistances of his Spirit, encourages them by his own example of long-sufferance, and by instances of Divine Providence, expressed even to creatures of smallest value, and by promise of great rewards, to the confident confession of his name; and furnishes them with some propositions, which are like so many bills of exchange, upon the trust of which they might take up necessaries; promising great retributions, not only to them who quit any thing of value for the sake of Jesus, but to them that offer a cup of water to a thirsty disciple." And with these instructions they departed to preach in the cities.

[c] John v. 19, &c.
[d] Suidas. voc. *σάββατον*.
[e] Evangel. Naz. quod S. Hieron. ex. Hebr. in Græcum transtulit.
"Ημισύ μου τέθνηκε, τὸ δ' ἥμισυ λιμὸς ἐλέγχει.
Σῶσόν μου, βασιλεῦ, μουσικὸν ἡμίτομον.

[f] Sic Tertullianus, Epiphanius, Chrysostomus, et Theophylactus, et Hieron. Dialog. advers. Lucif. uno ore affiirmant.
[g] Sic et apostolici semper duodenus honoris
Fulget apex, numero menses imitatus et horas,
Omnibus ut rebus semper tibi militet annus.—SEDU'L.

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7. And Jesus, returning to Capernaum, received the address of a faithful centurion of the legion called the Iron Legion,[h] (which usually quartered in Judea,) in behalf of his servant whom he loved, and who was grievously afflicted with the palsy; and healed him, as a reward and honour to his faith. And from thence going to the city Naim, he raised to life the only son of a widow, whom the mourners followed in the street, bearing the corpse sadly to his funeral. Upon the fame of these, and divers other miracles, John the Baptist, who was still in prison, (for he was not put to death till the latter end of this year,) sent two of his disciples to him by Divine providence, or else by John's designation, to minister occasions of his greater publication, inquiring if he was the Messias. To whom Jesus returned no answer, but a demonstration taken from the nature of the thing, and the glory of the miracles, saying, "Return to John, and tell him what you see; for the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised, and the lepers are cleansed, and to the poor the gospel is preached;"[i] which were the characteristic notes of the Messias, according to the predictions of the holy prophets.

8. When John's disciples were gone with this answer, Jesus began to speak concerning John; "of the austerity and holiness of his person, the greatness of his function, the divinity of his commission, saying, that he was 'greater than a prophet, a burning and shining light, the Elias that was to come,' and the consummation or ending of the old prophets: adding withal, that the perverseness of that age was most notorious in the entertainment of himself and the Baptist; for neither could the Baptist, who 'came neither eating nor drinking,' (that, by his austerity and mortified deportment he might invade the judgment and affections of the people,) nor Jesus, who 'came both eating and drinking,' (that, by a moderate and an affable life, framed to the compliance and common use of men, he might sweetly insinuate into the affections of the multitude,) obtain belief amongst them. They could object against every thing, but nothing could please them. But wisdom and righteousness had a theatre in its own family, and 'is justified of all her children.' Then he proceeds to a more applied reprehension of Capernaum, and Chorazin, and Bethsaida, for being pertinacious in their sins and infidelity, in defiance and reproof of all the mighty works which had been wrought in them. But these things were not revealed to all dispositions; the wise and the mighty of the world were not subjects prepared for the simplicity and softer impresses of the gospel, and the downright severity of its sanctions. And therefore Jesus glorified God for the magnifying of his mercy, in that these things, which were 'hid from the great ones,' were 'revealed to babes;' and concludes this sermon with an invitation of all wearied and disconsolate persons loaded with sin and misery, to 'come to him,' promising 'ease to their burdens,' and 'refreshment to their weariness,' and to exchange their heavy pressures into an 'easy yoke,' and a 'light burden.'"

9. When Jesus had ended this sermon, one of the Pharisees,[k] named Simon, invited him to "eat with him;" into whose house when he was entered, a certain "woman that was a sinner," abiding there in the city, heard of it: her name was Mary; she had been married to a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name of Magdalen, though she herself was born in Bethany; a widow she was, and prompted by her wealth, liberty, and youth, to an intemperate life, and too free entertainments. She came to Jesus into the Pharisee's house; not (as did the staring multitude) to glut her eyes with the sight of a miraculous and glorious person; nor (as did the centurion, or the Syro-Phœnician, or the ruler of the synagogue) for cure of her sickness, or in behalf of her friend, or child, or servant; but (the only example of so coming) she came in remorse and regret for her sins, she came to Jesus to lay her burden at his feet, and to present him with a broken heart, and a weeping eye, and great affection, and a box of nard pistic, salutary and precious. For she came trembling, and fell down before him, weeping bitterly for her sins,[l] pouring out a flood great enough to "wash the feet" of the blessed Jesus, and "wiping them with the hairs of her head;" after which she "brake the box," and "anointed his feet with ointment." Which expression was so great an ecstacy of love, sorrow, and adoration, that to anoint the feet even of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps and greatnesses of the Roman prodigality it was not used, till Otho taught it to Nero;[m] in whose instance it was by Pliny reckoned for a prodigy of unnecessary profusion, and in itself, without the circumstance of so free a dispensation, it was a present for a prince; and an alabaster box of nard pistic was sent as a present from Cambyses to the king of Ethiopia.

10. When Simon observed this sinner so busy in the expresses of her religion and veneration to Jesus, he thought with himself that this was "no prophet," that did "not know her to be a sinner;" or no just person, that would suffer her to touch him. For although the Jews' religion did permit harlots of their own nation to live, and enjoy the privileges of their nation, save that their oblations were refused: yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usages, or the benefits of ordinary society; and thought religion itself, and the honour of a prophet, was concerned in the interests of the same superciliousness: and therefore Simon made an objection within himself. Which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his thoughts, as well

[h] Dio, Hist. Rom. lib. lv.
[i] Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.
[k] Luke vii.
[l] ——— purgata recessit
Per gemitum; propriique lavans in gurgite fletûs,
Munda suis lacrymis redit, et detersa capillis.
SEDUL. lib. iii.
[m] Plin. Natur. Hist. lib. xiii. c. 3. Vide Athen. Deipnosoph. lib. xii. c. 30. Herodotus in Thalia.

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as his words,) made her apology and his own in a civil question, expressed in a parable of two debtors, to whom a greater and a less debt respectively was forgiven; both of them concluding, that they would love their merciful creditor in proportion to his mercy and donative: and this was the case of Mary Magdalen; to whom, because "much was forgiven, she loved much," and expressed it in characters so large, that the Pharisee might read his own incivilities and inhospitable entertainment of the Master, when it stood confronted with the magnificency of Mary Magdalen's penance and charity.

11. When Jesus had dined, he was presented with the sad sight of a poor demoniac, possessed with a blind and a dumb devil, in whose behalf his friends entreated Jesus, that he would cast the devil out; which he did immediately, and "the blind man saw, and the dumb spake," so much to the amazement of the people, that they ran in so prodigious companies after him, and so scandalized the Pharisees, who thought that, by means of this prophet, their reputation would be lessened and their schools empty, that first a rumour was scattered up and down, from an uncertain principle, but communicated with tumult and apparent noises, that Jesus was "beside himself:" upon which rumour his friends and kindred came together to see, and to make provisions accordingly; and the holy Virgin-mother came herself, but without any apprehensions of any such horrid accident. The words and things she had from the beginning laid up in her heart, would furnish her with principles exclusive of all apparitions of such fancies; but she came to see what that persecution was, which, under that colour, it was likely the Pharisees might commence.

12. When the mother of Jesus and his kindred came, they found him in a house, encircled with people full of wonder and admiration: and there the holy Virgin-mother might hear part of her own prophecy verified, that the generations of the earth should call her blessed; for a woman, worshipping Jesus, cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." To this Jesus replied, not denying her to be highly blessed, who had received the honour of being the mother of the Messias, but advancing the dignities of spiritual excellencies far above this greatest temporal honour in the world: "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it." For, in respect of the issues of spiritual perfections, and their proportionable benedictions, all immunities and temporal honours are empty and hollow blessings: and all relations of kindred disband and empty themselves into the greater channels and floods of divinity.

13. For when, Jesus being in the house, they told him "his mother and his brethren staid for him without;" he told them, those relations were less than the ties of duty and religion: for those dear names of mother and brethren, which are hallowed by the laws of God and the endearments of nature, are made far more sacred when a spiritual cognation does supervene, when the relations are subjected in persons religious and holy: but if they be abstract and separate, the conjunction of persons in spiritual bands, in the same faith, and the same hope, and the union of them in the same mystical head, is an adunation nearer to identity than those distances between parents and children, which are only cemented by the actions of nature, as it is of distinct consideration from the spirit. For Jesus, pointing to his disciples, said, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."

14. But the Pharisees, upon the occasion of the miracles, renewed the old quarrel: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub." Which senseless and illiterate objection Christ having confuted, charged them highly upon the guilt of an unpardonable crime, telling them, that the so charging those actions of his, done in virtue of the Divine Spirit, is a sin against the Holy Ghost: and however they might be bold with the Son of man, and prevarications against his words or injuries to his person might, upon repentance and baptism, find a pardon; yet it was a matter of greater consideration to sin against the Holy Ghost; that would find no pardon, here nor hereafter. But taking occasion upon this discourse, he, by an ingenious and mysterious parable, gives the world great caution of recidivation and backsliding after repentance. For if "the devil returns into a house once swept and garnished, he bringeth seven spirits more impure than himself; and the last estate of that man is worse than the first."

15. After this, Jesus went from the house of the Pharisee, and, coming to the sea of Tiberias or Gennesareth, (for it was called the sea of Tiberias from a town on the banks of the lake,) taught the people upon the shore, himself sitting in the ship; but he taught them by parables, under which were hid mysterious senses, which shone through their veil, like a bright sun through an eye closed with a thin eyelid; it being light enough to show their infidelity, but not to dispel those thick Egyptian darknesses, which they had contracted, by their habitual indispositions and pertinacious aversations. By the parable of "the sower scattering his seed by the way-side, and some on stony, some on thorny, some on good ground," he intimated the several capacities or indispositions of men's hearts, the carelessness of some, the frowardness and levity of others, the easiness and softness of a third; and how they are spoiled with worldliness and cares, and how many ways there are to miscarry, and that but one sort of men receive the word, and bring forth the fruits of a holy life. By the parable of "tares permitted to grow amongst the wheat," he intimated the toleration of dissenting opinions, not destructive of piety or civil societies. By the three parables of the "seed growing insensibly," of the "grain of mustard seed swelling up to a tree," of "a little leaven qualifying the whole lump," he signified the increment of the gospel, and the blessings upon the apostolical sermons.

16. Which parables when he had privately to his apostles rendered into their proper senses, he added

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to them two parables, concerning the dignity of the gospel, comparing it to "treasure hid in a field," and "a jewel of great price, for the purchase" of which every good "merchant must quit all that he hath," rather than miss it: telling them withal, that however purity and spiritual perfections were intended by the gospel, yet it would not be acquired by every person; but the public professors of christianity should be a mixed multitude, "like a net, enclosing fishes good and bad." After which discourses, he retired from the sea-side, and went to his own city of Nazareth; where he preached so excellently, upon certain words of the prophet Isaiah,[n] that all the people wondered at the wisdom which he expressed in his divine discourses. But the men of Nazareth did not do honour to the prophet, that was their countryman, because they knew him in all the disadvantages of youth, and kindred, and trade, and poverty; still retaining in their minds the infirmities and humilities of his first years, and keeping the same apprehensions of him, a man, and a glorious prophet, which they had to him, a child, in the shop of a carpenter. But when Jesus, in his sermon, had reproved their infidelity, at which he wondered, and, therefore, did but few miracles there, in respect of what he had done at Capernaum, and intimated the prelation of that city before Nazareth, "they thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built," intending to "throw him down headlong." But his work was not yet finished; therefore he, "passing through the midst of them, went his way."

17. Jesus therefore, departing from Nazareth, went up and down to all the towns and castles of Galilee, attended by his disciples, and certain women, out of whom he had cast unclean spirits; such as were Mary Magdalen, Johanna, wife to Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and some others, who did for him offices of provision, and "ministered to him out of their own substance," and became part of that holy college, which, about this time, began to be full; because now the apostles were returned from their preaching, full of joy, that the devils were made subject to the word of their mouth, and the empire of their prayers, and invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But their Master gave them a lenitive, to assuage the tumour and excrescence, intimating that such privileges are not solid foundations of a holy joy, but so far as they co-operate toward the great end of God's glory, and their own salvation, to which when they are consigned, and "their names written in heaven," in the book of election, and registers of predestination, then their joy is reasonable, holy, true, and perpetual.[o]

18. But when Herod had heard these things of Jesus, presently his apprehensions were such as derived from his guilt; he thought it was John the Baptist who was "risen from the dead," and that these "mighty works" were demonstrations of his power, increased by the superadditions of immortality and diviner influences, made proportionable to the honour of a martyr, and the state of separation.[p] For, a little before this time, Herod had sent to the castle of Macheruns, where John was prisoner, and caused him to be beheaded. His head Herodias buried in her own palace, thinking to secure it against a re-union, lest it should again disturb her unlawful lusts, and disquiet Herod's conscience. But the body the disciples of John gathered up, and carried it with honour and sorrow, and buried it in Sebaste, in the confines of Samaria, making his grave between the bodies of Elizeus and Abdias, the prophets. And about this time was the passover of the Jews.

[n] Isaiah lxi. 1.

[o] Vide Discourse of Certainty of Salvation, Num. 3.

DISCOURSE XV.

Of the Excellency, Ease, Reasonableness, and Advantages of bearing Christ's Yoke, and living according to his Institution.

1. THE holy Jesus came to break from off our necks two great yokes: the one of sin, by which we were fettered and imprisoned in the condition of slaves and miserable persons; the other, of Moses's law, by which we were kept in pupilage and minority, and a state of imperfection: and asserted us into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The first was a despotic empire, and the government of a tyrant: the second was of a school-master, severe, absolute, and imperious; but it was in order to a further good, yet nothing pleasant in the sufferance and load. And now Christ, having taken off these two, hath put on a third. He quits us of our burden, but not of our duty; and hath changed the former tyranny and the less perfect discipline into the sweetness of paternal regiment, and the excellency of such an institution, whose every precept carries part of its reward in hand, and assurances of after-glories. Moses's law was like sharp and unpleasant physic, certainly painful, but uncertainly healthful. For it was not then communicated to them, by promise and universal revelations, that the end of their obedience should be life eternal; but they were full of hopes it might be so, as we are of health when we have a learned and wise physician. But as yet the reward was in a cloud, and the hopes in fetters and confinement. But the law of Christ is like Christ's healing of diseases: he does it easily, and he does it infallibly. The event is certainly consequent; and the manner of cure is by a touch of his hand, or a word of his mouth, or an approximation to the "hem of his garment," without pain and vexatious instruments. My meaning is, that christianity is, by the assistance of Christ's Spirit, which he promised us and gave us in the gospel, made very easy to us: and yet a reward so great is promised, as were enough to make a lame man to walk, and a broken arm endure the burden; a reward great enough to make us willing to do violence to all our inclinations, passions, and desires. A hundredweight to a giant is a light burden, because his strength is disproportionably great, and makes it as easy to him as an ounce is to a child. And yet, if

[p] Virtutem incolumem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.—HOR. l. iii. Od. 24.

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we had not the strength of giants, if the hundredweight were of gold or jewels, a weaker person would think it no trouble to bear that burden, if it were the reward of his portage, and the hire of his labours. The Spirit is given to us to enable us, and heaven is promised to encourage us; the first makes us able, and the second makes us willing: and when we have power and affections we cannot complain of pressure. And this is the meaning of our blessed Saviour's invitation; "Come unto me, for my burden is light, my yoke is easy:"[a] which St. John also observed: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh, even our faith:"[b] that is, our belief of God's promises, the promise of the Spirit for present aid, and of heaven for the future reward, is strength enough to overcome all the world.

2. But besides that God hath made his yoke easy, by exterior supports, more than ever was in any other religion; christianity is of itself, according to human estimate, a religion more easy and desirable by our natural and reasonable appetites, than sin, in the midst of all its pleasures and imaginary felicities. Virtue hath more pleasure in it than sin, and hath all satisfactions to every desire of man, in order to human and prudent ends; which I shall represent in the consideration of these particulars. 1. To live according to the laws of Jesus is, in some things, most natural, and proportionable to the desires and first intentions of nature. 2. There is in it less trouble than in sin. 3. It conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, and natural and political satisfactions. 4. It is a means to preserve our temporal lives long and healthy. 5. It is most reasonable; and he only is prudent that does so, and he a fool that does not. And all this, besides the considerations of a glorious and happy eternity.

3. Concerning the first, I consider that we do very ill, when, instead of making our natural infirmity an instrument of humility, and of recourse to the grace of God, we pretend the sin of Adam to countenance our actual sins, natural infirmity to excuse our malice; either laying Adam in fault, for deriving the disability upon us, or God, for putting us into the necessity. But the evils that we feel in this, are from the rebellion of the inferior appetite against reason, or against any religion, that puts restraint upon our first desires. And, therefore, in carnal and sensual instances accidentally, we find the more natural averseness, because God's laws have put our irascible and concupiscible faculties in fetters and restraints: yet, in matters of duty, which are of immaterial and spiritual concernment, all our natural reason is a perfect enemy and contradiction to, and a law against, vice. It is natural for us to love our parents, and they who do not are unnatural; they do violence to those dispositions, which God gave us to the constitution of our nature, and for the designs of virtue: and all those tendernesses of affection, those bowels and relenting dispositions, which are the endearments of parents and children, are also the bonds of duty. Every degree of love makes duty delectable: and, therefore, either by nature we are inclined to hate our parents, which is against all reason and experience, or else we are, by nature, inclined to do them all that, which is the effect of love to such superiors, and principles of being and dependence: and every prevarication from the rule, effects, and expresses of love, is a contradiction to nature, and a mortification; to which we cannot be invited by any thing from within, but by something from without, that is violent and preternatural. There are also many other virtues, even in the matter of sensual appetite, which none can lose, but by altering, in some degree, the natural disposition. And I instance in the matter of carnality and uncleanness, to which possibly some natures may think themselves apt and disposed: but yet God hath put into our mouths a bridle, to curb the licentiousness of our speedy appetite, putting into our very natures a principle as strong to restrain it, as there is in us a disposition apt to invite us; and this is also in persons who are most apt to the vice, women and young persons, to whom God hath given a modesty and shame of nature, that the entertainments of lusts may become contradictions to our retreating and backward modesty, more than they are satisfactions to our too forward appetites. It is as great a mortification and violence to nature to blush, as to lose a desire; and we find it true, when persons are invited to confess their sins, or to ask forgiveness publicly, a secret smart is not so violent as a public shame: and, therefore, to do an action which brings shame all along, and opens the sanctuaries of nature, and makes all her retirements public, and dismantles her enclosure, as lust does, and the shame of carnality, hath in it more asperity and abuse to nature, than the short pleasure to which we are invited can repay. There are unnatural lusts, lusts which are such in their very condition and constitution, that a man must turn a woman, and a woman become a beast, in acting them; and all lusts, that are not unnatural in their own complexion, are unnatural by a consequent and accidental violence. And if lust hath in it dissonancies to nature, there are but few apologies left to excuse our sins upon nature's stock: and all that system of principles and reasonable inducements to virtue, which we call "the law of nature," is nothing else but that firm ligature and incorporation of virtue to our natural principles and dispositions, which whoso prevaricates, does more against nature than he that restrains his appetite. And, besides these particulars, there is not, in our natural discourse, any inclination, directly and by intention of itself, contrary to the love of God, because by God we understand that Fountain of being which is infinitely perfect in itself, and of great good to us; and whatsoever is so apprehended, it is as natural for us to love, as to love any thing in the world; for we can love nothing but what we believe to be good in itself, or good to us.[c] And be-

[a] Matt. xi. 28, 30.
[b] 1 John v. 3, 4.

[c] Ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ ἄλλο περὶ θεοῦ ὅ, τι ἂν εἴποιμι, ἢ ὅτι ἀγαθός τε παντάπασιν εἴη, καὶ ξύμπαντα ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ

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yond this, there are, in nature, many principles and reasons to make an aptness to acknowledge and confess God; and, by the consent of nations, which they also have learned from the dictates of their nature, all men, in some manner or other, worship God. And, therefore, when this, our nature, is determined in its own indefinite principle, to the manner of worship, all acts against the love, the obedience, and the worship of God, are also against nature, and offer it some rudeness and violence. And I shall observe this, and refer it to every man's reason and experience, that the great difficulties of virtue, commonly apprehended, commence not so much upon the stock of nature, as of education and evil habits.[d] Our virtues are difficult, because we at first get ill habits; and these habits must be unrooted before we do well; and that is our trouble. But if, by the strictness of discipline and wholesome education, we begin at first in our duty, and the practice of virtuous principles, we shall find virtue made as natural to us, while it is customary and habitual, as we pretend infirmity to be, and propensity to vicious practices. And this we are taught by that excellent Hebrew who said, "Wisdom is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her: she preventeth them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travel; for he shall find her sitting at his doors."[e]

4. Secondly: In the strict observances of the law of christianity there is less trouble than in the habitual courses of sin. For if we consider the general design of christianity, it propounds to us in this world nothing that is of difficult purchase,[f] nothing beyond what God allots us, by the ordinary and common providence, such things which we are to receive without care and solicitous vexation: so that the ends are not big, and the way is easy; and this walked over with much simplicity and sweetness, and those obtained without difficulty. He that propounds to himself to live low, pious, humble, and retired, his main employment is nothing but sitting quiet, and undisturbed with variety of impertinent affairs: but he that loves the world, and its acquisitions, entertains a thousand businesses, and every business hath a world of employment, and every employment is multiplied, and made intricate by circumstances, and every circumstance is to be disputed, and he that disputes ever hath two sides in enmity and opposition; and by this time there is a genealogy, a long descent, and cognation of troubles, branched into so many particulars, that it is troublesome to understand them, and much more to run through them. The ways of virtue are very much upon the defensive, and the work one, uniform, and little; they are like war within a strong castle, if they stand upon their guard they seldom need to strike a stroke. But a vice is like storming of a fort, full of noise, trouble, labour, danger, and disease. How easy a thing is it to restore the pledge! But if a man means to defeat him that trusted him, what a world of arts must he use to make pretences! To delay first, then to excuse, then to object, then to intricate the business, next to quarrel, then to forswear it, and all the way to palliate his crime, and represent himself honest. And if an oppressing and greedy person have a design to cozen a young heir, or to get his neighbour's land, the cares of every day, and the interruptions of every night's sleep, are more than the purchase is worth; whereas he might buy virtue at half that watching, and the less painful care of a fewer number of days. A plain story is soonest told, and best confutes an intricate lie; and when a person is examined in judgment, one false answer asks more wit for its support and maintenance than a history of truth.[g] And such persons are put to so many shameful retreats, false colours, fucuses, and daubings with untempered mortar, to avoid contradiction or discovery, that the labour of a false story seems, in the order of things, to be designed the beginning of its punishment. And if we consider how great a part of our religion consists in prayer, and how easy a thing God requires of us, when he commands us to pray for blessings, the duty of a christian cannot seem very troublesome.

5. And, indeed, I can hardly instance in any vice, but there is visibly more pain in the order of acting and observing it, than in the acquist or promotion of virtue.[h] I have seen drunken persons, in their seas of drink and talk, dread every cup as a blow, and they have used devices and private arts, to escape the punishment of a full draught; and the poor wretch, being condemned, by the laws of drinking, to his measure, was forced and haled to execution; and he suffered it, and thought himself engaged to that person, who, with much kindness and importunity, invited him to a fever. But, certainly, there was more pain in it, than in the strictness of holy and severe temperance. And he that shall compare the troubles and dangers of an ambitious war, with the gentleness and easiness of peace, will soon perceive, that every tyrant and usurping prince, that snatches at his neighbour's rights, hath two armies, one of men, and the other of cares. Peace sheds no blood, but of the pruned

τῇ αὐτοῦ ἔχει· λεγέτω δὲ ὥσπερ γινώσκειν ἕκαστος ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ὅσιται, καὶ ἱερεὺς καὶ ἰδιώτης.—PROCOP. Gothic. 1.

Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν ἐνουσιωμένος ὅρκος, ἔχεσθαι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ποιητοῦ, καὶ μὴ παραβαίνειν μηδαμῇ τοὺς ὑπ' ἐκείνου διορισθέντας νόμους.—HIEROCL.

[d] Siquidem Leonides, Alexandri pædagogus, quibusdam eum vitiis imbuit, quæ robustum quoque et jam maximum regem ab illa institutione puerili sunt prosecuta.—QUINTIL. lib. i. c. 1.

[e] Wisd. vi. 12, 13, 14.

[f] Multò difficilius est facere ista quæ facitis. Quid nam quiete otiosius est animi? Quid irâ laboriosius? Quid clementiâ remissius? Quid crudelitate negotiosius? Vacat pudicitia, libido occupatissima est. Omnium denique virtutum tutela facilior est; vitia magno coluntur.—SENECA.

In vitiis abit voluptas, manet turpitudo; cùm in rectè factis abeat labor, maneat honestas.—MUSON.

[g] Nam statum cujusque ad securitatem melius innocentiâ tueor, quàm eloquentiâ.—QUINTIL. Dial. de Orat.

[h] Quid namque à nobis, exigit, (religio,) quid præstari sibi à nobis jubet, nisi solam tantummodo fidem, castitatem, humilitatem, sobrietatem, misericordiam, sanctitatem, quæ utique omnia non onerant nos, sed ornant.—SALVIAN.

Ἡ ἀρετὴ φαντασία μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν πρόχειρον ἐντεῦξιν ἀργαλέον εἶναι δοκεῖ, μελέτῃ δὲ ᾄδιστον, καὶ ἐξ ἐπιλόγισμοῦ σύμφερον. Δυσκολώτερον ἡ κακία τῆς ἀρετῆς.—S. CHRYSOST. Ὁ πολλὰ πίνων κ' ἐξαμαρτάνει.

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vine; and hath no business, but modest and quiet entertainments of the time, opportune for piety, and circled with reward. But God often punishes ambition and pride with lust; and he sent a "thorn in the flesh," as a corrective to the elevations and *grandezza* of St. Paul, growing up from the multitude of his revelations: and it is not likely the punishment should have less trouble than the crime, whose pleasures and obliquity this was designed to punish. And, indeed, every experience can verify, that an adulterer hath in him the impatience of desires, the burnings of lust, the fear of shame, the apprehensions of a jealous, abused, and an enraged husband.[i] He endures affronts, mistimings, tedious waitings, the dulness of delay, the regret of interruption, the confusion and amazements of discovery, the scorn of a reproached vice, the debasings of contempt upon it; unless the man grows impudent, and then he is more miserable upon another stock. But David was so put to it, to attempt, to obtain, to enjoy Bathsheba, and to prevent the shame of it, that the difficulty was greater than all his wit and power; and it drove him into base and unworthy arts, which discovered him the more, and multiplied his crime. But while he enjoyed the innocent pleasures of his lawful bed, he had no more trouble in it, than there was in inclining his head upon his pillow. The ways of sin are crooked, desert, rocky, and uneven:[k] they are broad, indeed; and there is variety of ruins, and allurements, to entice fools, and a large theatre to act the bloody tragedies of souls upon; but they are nothing smooth, or safe, or delicate. The ways of virtue are strait, but not crooked; narrow, but not unpleasant. There are two vices for one virtue; and, therefore, the way to hell must needs be of greater extent, latitude, and dissemination: but, because virtue is but one way, therefore it is easy, regular, and apt to walk in, without error or diversions. "Narrow is the gate, and strait is the way:" it is true, considering our evil customs and depraved natures, by which we have made it so to us. But God hath made it more passable, by his grace and present aids; and St. John the Baptist receiving his commission to preach repentance, it was expressed in these words: "Make plain the paths of the Lord." Indeed, repentance is a rough and a sharp virtue, and, like a mattock and spade, breaks away all the roughnesses of the passage, and hinderances of sin; but when we enter into the dispositions, which Christ hath designed to us, the way is more plain and easy than the ways of death and hell. Labour it hath in it, just as all things that are excellent; but no confusions, no distractions of thought, no amazements, no labyrinths, and intricacy of counsels: but it is like the labours of agriculture, full of health and simplicity, plain and profitable; requiring diligence, but such in which crafts and painful stratagems are useless and impertinent. But vice hath oftentimes so troublesome a retinue, and so many objections in the event of things, is so entangled in difficult and contradictory circumstances, hath in it parts so opposite to each other, and so inconsistent with the present condition of the man, or some secret design of his, that those little pleasures, which are its fucus and pretence, are less perceived and least enjoyed, while they begin in fantastic semblances, and rise up in smoke, vain and hurtful, and end in dissatisfaction.

6. But it is considerable, that God, and the sinner, and the devil, all join in increasing the difficulty and trouble of sin; upon contrary designs, indeed, but all co-operate to the verification of this discourse. For God, by his restraining grace, and the checks of a tender conscience, and the bands of public honesty, and the sense of honour and reputation, and the customs of nations, and the severities of laws, makes that, in most men, the choice of vice is imperfect, dubious, and troublesome, and the pleasures abated, and the apprehensions various, and in differing degrees: and men act their crimes while they are disputing against them, and the balance is cast by a few grains, and scruples vex and disquiet the possession; and the difference is perceived to be so little, that inconsideration and inadvertency is the greatest means to determine many men to the entertainment of a sin. And this God does with a design to lessen our choice, and to disabuse our persuasions from arguments and weak pretences of vice, and to invite us to the trials of virtue, when we see its enemy giving us so ill conditions. And yet the sinner himself makes the business of sin greater; for its nature is so loathsome, and its pleasure so little, and its promises so unperformed, that when it lies open, easy and apt to be discerned, there is no argument in it ready to invite us; and men hate a vice which is every day offered and prostitute; and when they seek for pleasure, unless difficulty presents it, as there is nothing in it really to persuade a choice, so there is nothing strong or witty enough to abuse a man. And to this purpose, (amongst some others, which are malicious and crafty,) the devil gives assistance, knowing that men despise what is cheap and common, and suspect a latent excellency to be in difficult and forbidden objects: and, therefore, the devil sometimes crosses an opportunity of sin, knowing that the desire is the iniquity, and does his work sufficiently: and yet the crossing the desire, by impeding the act, heightens the appetite, and makes it more violent and impatient. But by all these means, sin is made more troublesome than the pleasures of the temptation can account for: and it will be a strange imprudence to leave virtue, upon pretence of its difficulty, when, for that very reason, we the rather entertain the instances of sin, despising a cheap sin and a costly virtue; choosing to walk through the brambles of a desert, rather than to climb the fruit-trees of paradise.

7. Thirdly: Virtue conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, to secular felicities, and political satisfactions;[l] and vice does the quite contrary. For the blessings of this life are these, that make it happy; peace and quietness; content and satisfac-

[i] ——— et Cecropiæ domûs
Æternum opprobrium, quòd malè barbaras
Regum est ulta libidines. HOR. lib. iv. Od. 12.

[k] Διοδεύειν ἐρήμους ἀβάτους.—Wisd. v. 7.

[l] Ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐστιν εὐσεβὶς καὶ συμφέρον.—ARRIAN.

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tion of desires; riches; love of friends and neighbours; honour and reputation abroad; a healthful body, and a long life. This last is a distinct consideration, but the other are proper to this title. For the first, it is certain, peace was so designed by the holy Jesus, that he framed all his laws in compliance to that design. He that returns good for evil, a soft answer to the asperity of his enemy, kindness to injuries, lessens the contention always, and sometimes gets a friend; and when he does not, he shames his enemy. Every little accident in a family, to peevish and angry persons,[m] is the matter of a quarrel; and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire; and no man can tell how far that may burn; it may be to a dissolution of the whole fabric. But whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus, bears with the infirmities of his relatives and society, seeks with sweetness to remedy what is ill, and to prevent what it may produce; and throws water upon a spark, and lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, providently and discreetly with his servants; and they all love the *major-domo*, and look upon him as their parent, their guardian, their friend, their patron, their *proveditore*. But look upon a person angry, peaceless, and disturbed; when he enters upon his threshold, it gives an alarm to his house, and puts them to flight, or upon their defence; and the wife reckons the joy of her day is done when he returns, and the children inquire into their father's age, and think his life tedious; and the servants curse privately, and do their service as slaves do, only when they dare not do otherwise; and they serve him as they serve a lion, they obey his strength, and fear his cruelty, and despise his manners, and hate his person. No man enjoys content in his family, but he that is peaceful and charitable, just and loving, forbearing and forgiving, careful and provident. He that is not so, his house may be his castle, but it is manned by enemies; his "house is built," not "upon the sand," but upon the waves, and upon a tempest: the foundation is uncertain, but his ruin is not so.

8. And if we extend the relations of the man beyond his own walls, he that does his duty to his neighbour, that is, all offices of kindness, gentleness, and humanity, nothing of injury and affront, is certain never to meet with a wrong so great, as is the inconvenience of a law-suit, or the contention of neighbours, and all the consequent dangers and inconvenience. Kindness will create and invite kindness; an injury provokes an injury. And since "the love of neighbours" is one of those beauties which Solomon did admire, and that this beauty is within the combination of precious things, which adorn and reward a peaceable, charitable disposition; he that is in love with spiritual excellencies, with intellectual rectitudes, with peace, and with blessings of society, knows they grow amongst the rose-bushes of virtue, and holy obedience to the laws of Jesus. And "for a good man some will even dare to die;" and a sweet and charitable disposition is received with fondness, and all the endearments of the neighbourhood. He that observes how many families are ruined by contention,[n] and how many spirits are broken by the care, and contumely, and fear, and spite, which are entertained, as advocates to promote a suit of law, will soon confess, that a great loss, and peaceable quitting of a considerable interest, is a purchase and a gain, in respect of a long suit and a vexatious quarrel. And still, if the proportion rises higher, the reason swells, and grows more necessary and determinate. For if we would live according to the discipline of christian religion, one of the great plagues which vex the world would be no more. That there should be no wars, was one of the designs of christianity; and the living according to that institution, which is able to prevent all wars, and to establish an universal and eternal peace, when it is obeyed, is the using an infallible instrument toward that part of our political happiness, which consists in peace. This world would be an image of heaven, if all men were charitable, peaceable, just, and loving. To this excellency all those precepts of Christ, which consist in forbearance and forgiveness, do co-operate.

9. But the next instance of the reward of holy obedience, and conformity to Christ's laws, is itself a duty, and needs no more but a mere repetition of it. We must be content[o] in every state; and because christianity teaches us this lesson, it teaches us to be happy: for nothing from without can make us miserable, unless we join our own consents to it, and apprehend it such, and entertain it in our sad and melancholic retirements. A prison is but a retirement, and opportunity of serious thoughts, to a person whose spirit is confined, and apt to sit still, and desires no enlargement beyond the cancels of the body, till the state of separation calls it forth into a fair liberty. But every retirement is a prison to a loose and wandering fancy, for whose wildness no precepts are restraint, no band of duty is confinement; who when he hath broken the first hedge of duty, can never after endure any enclosure so much as in a symbol. But this precept is so necessary, that it is not more a duty than a rule of prudence, and in many accidents of our lives it is the only cure of sadness: for it is certain, that no providence less than Divine can prevent evil and cross accidents; but that is an excellent remedy to the evil, that receives the accident within its power, and takes out the sting, paring the nails, and draw-

[m] Malignum hunc esse hominem forsan credas.
Ego esse miserum credo, cui placet nemo.—MART. Ep.

[n] "Ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐρίθεια, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία, καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα.—JAC. iii. 16.

[o] Αὐτάρκεια τοῦ βίου φιλοσοφία αὐτοδίδακτος.—POL.
Vitio vertunt quia multa egeo; at ego illis, quia nequeunt egere.—M. CATO apud Aul. Gell. lib. xiii. c. 22.
Neque mala vel bona, quæ vulgus putat: multos qui conflictari adversis videantur, beatos, ac pleroseque, quamquam magnas per opes, miserrimos; si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur.—TACIT. An. lib. vi.
——Si celeres (fortuna) quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit, et meâ
Virtute me involvo; probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 29.
Κάλλιστον ἐστι τοὔνδικον πεφυκέναι·
Λῷστον δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἄνοσον· ἡδίστον δ' ὅτῳ
Πάρεστι λῆψις ὧν ἐρᾷ καθ' ἡμέραν.—SOPHOCL. Creusâ.

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ing the teeth of the wild beast, that it may be tame, or harmless and medicinal. For all content consists in the proportion of the object to the appetite: and because external accidents are not in our own power, and it were nothing excellent that things happened to us according to our first desires, God hath, by his grace, put it into our own power to make the happiness, by making our desires descend to the event, and comply with the chance, and combine with all the issues of Divine providence. And then we are noble persons, when we borrow not our content from things below us, but make our satisfactions from within.[p] And it may be considered, that every little care may disquiet us, and may increase itself by reflection upon its own acts; and every discontent may discompose our spirits, and put an edge, and make afflictions poignant, but cannot take off one from us, but makes every one to be two. But content removes not the accident, but complies with it; it takes away the sharpness and displeasure of it, and, by stooping down, makes the lowest equal, proportionable, and commensurate. Impatience makes an ague to be a fever, and every fever to be a calenture, and that calenture may expire in madness: but a quiet spirit is a great disposition to health, and, for the present, does alleviate the sickness. And this also is notorious in the instance of covetousness. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have pierced themselves with many sorrows."[q] Vice makes poor, and does ill endure it.

10. For he that, in the school of Christ, hath learned to determine his desires, when his needs are served, and to judge of his needs by the proportions of nature, hath nothing wanting towards riches. Virtue makes poverty become rich; and no riches can satisfy a covetous mind, or rescue him from the affliction of the worst kind of poverty.[r] He only wants, that is not satisfied. And there is a great infelicity in a family, where poverty dwells with discontent: there the husband and wife quarrel for want of a full table and a rich wardrobe; and their love, that was built upon false arches, sinks when such temporary supporters are removed; they are like two millstones, which set the mill on fire when they want corn: and then their combinations and society were unions of lust, or not supported with religious love. But we may easily suppose St. Joseph and the holy Virgin-mother in Egypt poor as hunger, forsaken as banishment, disconsolate as strangers; and yet their present lot gave them no affliction, because the angel fed them with a necessary hospitality, and their desires were no larger than their tables, and their eyes looked only upwards, and they were careless of the future, and careful of their duty, and so made their life pleasant by the measures and discourses of Divine philosophy. When Elisha stretched himself upon the body of the child, and laid hands to hands, and applied mouth to mouth, and so shrunk himself in the posture of commensuration with the child, he brought life into the dead trunk: and so may we, by applying our spirits to the proportions of a narrow fortune, bring life and vivacity into our dead and lost condition, and make it live till it grows bigger, or else returns to health and salutary uses.

11. And besides this philosophical extraction of gold from stones, and riches from the dungeon of poverty, a holy life does most probably procure such a proportion of riches, which can be useful to us, or consistent with our felicity. For besides that the holy Jesus hath promised all things, which "our heavenly Father knows we need," (provided we do our duty,) and that we find great securities and rest from care, when we have once cast our cares upon God, and placed our hopes in his bosom; besides all this, the temperance, sobriety, and prudence of a christian is a great income, and by not despising it, a small revenue combines its parts, till it grows to a heap big enough for the emissions of charity, and all the offices of justice, and the supplies of all necessities: whilst vice is unwary, prodigal, and indiscreet, throwing away great revenues, as tributes to intemperance and vanity, and suffering dissolution and forfeiture of estates, as a punishment and curse. Some sins are direct improvidence and ill husbandry. I reckon in this number intemperance, lust, litigiousness, ambition, bribery, prodigality, gaming, pride, sacrilege, which is the greatest spender of them all, and makes a fair estate evaporate like camphire, turning it into nothing, no man knows which way.[s] But what the Roman gave as an estimate of a rich man, saying, "He that can maintain an army, is rich," was but a short account; for he that can maintain an army, may be beggared by one vice, and it is a vast revenue that will pay the debt-books of intemperance or lust.

12. To these if we add that virtue is honourable,[t]

[p] Non enim gazæ, neque consularis
Summovet lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes. HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 16.
Quemcunque fortem videris, miserum neges.
SENEC. Trag.
Τίκτουσι γὰρ τοι καὶ νόσους δυσθυμίαι.—SOPH. Tereus.
Μὴ σύ γε ἄυξανε τὴν εἱμαρμένην.—ZOROAST.

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 10.

[r] Cùm perjura patris fides
Consortem socium fallat et hospitem,
Indignoque pecuniam
Hæredi properet. Scilicet improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ; tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.
HORAT. lib. iii. Od. 24.
——— Vel dic, quid referat intra
Naturæ fines viventi, jugera centum an
Mille aret ———
Ut, tibi si sit opus liquidi non ampliùs urnâ,
Vel cyatho, et dicas; Magno de flumine mallem,
Quàm ex hoc fonticulo tantundem sumere. Eo fit,
Plenior ut si quos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripæ simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer:
At qui tantulo eget quanto est opus, is neque limo
Turbatam haurit aquam, neque vitam amittit in undis.
HORAT. Serm. lib. i. Sat. 1.
——— Προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ
Κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.—SOPH. Elect.

[s] Aleam exercent tantâ lucrandi perdendive temeritate, ut cùm omnia defecerunt, novissimo jactu de libertate et de corpore contendant.—TACIT. de Mor. Germ.

[t] Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus;
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.—HORAT. lib. iii. Od. 2.

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and a great advantage to a fair reputation, that it is praised[u] by them that love it not, that it is honoured by the followers and family of vice, that it forces glory out of shame, honour from contempt, that it reconciles men to the fountain of honour, the Almighty God, who will "honour them that honour him;" there are but a few more excellencies in the world to make up the rosary of temporal felicity. And it is so certain that religion serves even our temporal ends, that no great end of state can well be served without it; not ambition, not desires of wealth, not any great design, but religion must be made its usher or support.[x] If a new opinion be commenced, and the author would make a sect, and draw disciples after him, at least he must be thought to be religious; which is a demonstration how great an instrument of reputation piety and religion is: and if the pretence will do us good offices amongst men, the reality will do the same, besides the advantages which we shall receive from the Divine benediction. The "power of godliness" will certainly do more than the "form" alone. And it is most notorious in the affairs of the clergy, whose lot it hath been to fall from great riches to poverty, when their wealth made them less curious of their duty; but when humility, and chastity, and exemplary sanctity, have been the enamel of their holy order; the people, like the Galatians, would pull out their own eyes to do them benefit. And indeed God hath singularly blessed[y] such instruments, to the being the only remedies to repair the breaches made by sacrilege and irreligion. But certain it is, no man was ever honoured for that which was esteemed vicious. Vice hath got money and a curse many times, and vice hath adhered to the instruments and purchases of honour: but, among all nations whatsoever, those called honourable put on the face and pretence of virtue. But I choose to instance in the proper cognizance of a christian, humility, which seems contradictory to the purposes and reception of honour; and yet, in the world, nothing is a more certain means to purchase it. Do not all the world hate a proud man? And, therefore, what is contrary to humility, is also contradictory to honour and reputation. And when the apostle had given command, that "in giving honour, we should one go before another," he laid the foundation of praises, and panegyrics, and triumphs. And as humility is secure against affronts and tempests of despite, because it is below them; so when, by employment, or any other issue of Divine providence, it is drawn from its sheath and secrecy, it shines clear and bright as the purest and most polished metals. Humility is like a tree, whose root, when it sets deepest in the earth, rises higher, and spreads fairer, and stands surer, and lasts longer; every step of its descent is like a rib of iron, combining its parts in unions indissoluble, and placing it in the chambers of security. No wise man ever lost any thing by cession; but he receives the hostility of violent persons into his embraces; like a stone into a lap of wool, it rests and sits down soft and innocently; but a stone falling upon a stone makes a collision, and extracts fire, and finds no rest: and just so are two proud persons, despised by each other, contemned by all, living in perpetual dissonancies, always fighting against affronts, jealous of every person, disturbed by every accident, a perpetual storm within, and daily hissings from without.

13. Fourthly: Holiness and obedience is an excellent preservative of life, and makes it long and healthful. In order to which discourse, because it is new, material, and argumentative, apt to persuade men, who prefer life before all their other interests, I consider many things. First: In the Old Testament, a long and a prosperous life were the great promises of the covenant; their hopes were built upon it, and that was made the support of all their duty. "If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, I will put none of the diseases upon thee which I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee."[z] And more particularly yet, that we may not think piety to be security only against the plagues of Egypt, God makes his promise more indefinite and unconfined: "Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee, and will fulfil the number of thy days;"[a] that is, the period of nature shall be the period of thy person; thou shalt live long, and die in a seasonable and ripe age. And this promise was so verified by a long experience, that, by David's time, it grew up to a rule: "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips, that they speak no guile."[b] And the same argument was pressed by Solomon, who was an excellent philosopher, and well skilled in the natural and accidental means of preservation of our lives: "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil; and it shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."[c] "Length of days is in the right hand of wisdom:" for "she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her."[d] Meaning, that the tree of life and immortality, which God had planted in paradise, and which, if man had stood, he should have tasted, and have lived for ever, the fruit of that tree is offered upon the same conditions; if we will keep the commandments of God, our obedience, like the tree of life, shall consign us to immortality hereafter, by a long and a healthful life here. And therefore, although in Moses's time the days of man had been shortened, till they came to "threescore years and ten, or fourscore years, and then their strength is but labour and sorrow;"[e] (for Moses was author of that psalm;) yet to show the great privilege of those persons whose piety was great, Moses himself attained to one hundred and twenty years, which was

[u] ——— virtus laudatur, et alget.—JUVEN.

[x] Præcipuam imperatoriæ majestatis curam esse prospicimus, religionis indaginem; cujus si cultum retinere potuerimus, iter prosperitatis humanis aperitur inceptis.—THEOD. et VALENT. in Cod. Theod.

[y] Dedit enim providentia hominibus munus, ut honesta magis juvarent.—QUINTIL. lib. i. c. 12.

[z] Exod. xv. 26.

[a] Exod. xxiii. 25, 26.

[b] Psalm xxxiv. 12, 13.

[c] Prov. iii. 7, 8.

[d] Ver. 16, 18.

[e] Psalm xc. 10.

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almost double to the ordinary and determined period. But Enoch and Elias never died, and became great examples to us, that a spotless and holy life might possibly have been immortal.

14. I shall add no more examples, but one great conjugation of precedent observed by the Jewish writers; who tell us, that in the second temple there were three hundred high priests, (I suppose they set down a certain number for an uncertain, and by three hundred they mean very many,) and yet that temple lasted but four hundred and twenty years; the reason of this so rapid and violent abscission of their priests being their great and scandalous impieties: and yet, in the first temple, whose abode was, within ten years, as long as the second, there was a succession but of eighteen high priests: for they being generally very pious, and the preservers of their rites and religion, against the schism of Jeroboam, and the defection of Israel, and the idolatry and irreligion of many of the kings of Judah, God took delight to reward it with a long and honourable old age. And Balaam knew well enough what he said, when, in his ecstasy and prophetic rapture, he made his prayer to God: "Let my soul die the death of the righteous."[f] It was not a prayer that his soul might be saved, or that he might repent at last; for repentance and immortality were revelations of a later date: but he, in his prophetic ecstasy, seeing what God had purposed to the Moabites, and what blessings he had reserved for Israel, prays that he might not die, as the Moabites were like to die, with an untimely death, by the sword of their enemies, dispossessed of their country, spoiled of their goods, in the period and last hour of their nation: but let my soul die the death of the just, the death designed for the faithful Israelites; such a death which God promised to Abraham, that he should return to his fathers in peace, and in a good old age. For the death[g] of the righteous is like the descending of ripe and wholesome fruits from a pleasant and florid tree; our senses entire, our limbs unbroken, without horrid tortures, after provision made for our children, with a blessing entailed upon posterity, in the presence of our friends, our dearest relative closing up our eyes, and binding our feet, leaving a good name behind us. O let my soul die such a death! for this, in whole or in part, according as God sees it good, is the manner that the righteous die. And this was Balaam's prayer. And this was the state and condition in the Old Testament.

15. In the gospel the case is nothing altered. For, besides that those austerities, rigours, and mortifications, which are in the gospel advised or commanded respectively, are more salutary, or of less corporal inconvenience, than a vicious life of intemperance, or lust, or carefulness, or tyrant covetousness; there is no accident or change, to the sufferance of which the gospel hath engaged us, but in the very thing our life is carefully provided for, either in kind, or by a gainful exchange: "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it, and he that will save his life, shall lose it."[h] And although God, who promised long life to them that obey, did not promise that himself would never call for our life, borrowing it of us, and repaying it in a glorious and advantageous exchange; yet this very promise of giving us a better life in exchange for this, when we exposed it in martyrdom, does confirm our title to this, this being the instrument of permutation with the other: for God, obliging himself to give us another in exchange for this, when, in cases extraordinary, he calls for this, says plainly, that this is our present right by grace, and the title of the Divine promises. But the promises are clear. For St. Paul calls children to the observation of the fifth commandment, by the same argument which God used in the first promulgation of it. "Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the earth."[i] For although the gospel be built upon better promises than the law, yet it hath the same too, not as its foundation, but as appendances and adjuncts of grace, and supplies of need. "Godliness[k] hath the promise of this life, as well as of the life that is to come."[l] That is plain. And although Christ revealed his Father's mercies to us, in new expresses and great abundance: yet he took nothing from the world which ever did, in any sense, invite piety, or endear obedience, or cooperate towards felicity. And, therefore, the promises which were made of old, are also presupposed in the new, and mentioned by intimation and implication within the greater. When our blessed Saviour, in seven of the eight beatitudes, had instanced in new promises and rewards, as "heaven, seeing of God, life eternal;"[m] in one of them, to which heaven is as certainly consequent as to any of the rest, he did choose to instance in a temporal blessing, and in the very words of the Old Testament;[n] to show, that that part of the old covenant, which concerns morality, and the rewards of obedience, remains firm, and included within the conditions of the gospel.

16. To this purpose is that saying of our blessed Saviour: "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;"[o] meaning, that besides natural means, ordained for the preservation of our lives, there are means supernatural and divine. God's blessing does as much as bread: nay it is "every word proceeding out of the mouth of God;" that is, every precept and commandment of God is so for our good, that it is intended as food and physic to us, as means to make us live long. And therefore God hath done in this as in other graces and issues

[f] Num. xxiii. 10.

[g] Μηδέ μοι ἄκλαυστος θάνατος μόλοι, ἀλλὰ φίλοισι
Καλλείποιμι θανὼν ἄλγεα καὶ στοναχάς.—SOLON.
Cicero, in Tuscul. l. sic reddit:
Mors mea non careat lacrymis: linquamus amicis
Mœrorem, ut celebrent funera cum gemitu.

[h] Matt. x. 39.

[i] Ephes. vi. 2, 3.

[k] —— οὐ γὰρ εὐσήβεια συνθνήσκει βροτοῖς·
Κἂν ζῶσι, κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.
SOPHOCL. Philoct.

[l] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

[m] Matt. v. 3, &c. Ver. 5.

[n] Psalm xxxvii. 11.

[o] Matt. iv. 4. Deut. viii. 3.

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evangelical, which he purposed to continue in his church for ever: he first gave it in miraculous and extraordinary manner, and then gave it by way of perpetual ministry. The Holy Ghost appeared at first like a prodigy, and with miracle; he descended in visible representments, expressing himself in revelations and powers extraordinary: but it being a promise intended to descend upon all ages of the church, there was appointed a perpetual ministry for its conveyance; and still, though without a sign or miraculous representment, it is ministered in confirmation by imposition of the bishop's hands. And thus, also, health and long life, which, by way of ordinary benediction, is consequent to piety, faith, and obedience evangelical, was at first given in a miraculous manner, that so the ordinary effects, being at first confirmed by miraculous and extraordinary instances and manners of operation, might, for ever after, be confidently expected, without any dubitation, since it was in the same manner consigned, by which all the whole religion was, by a voice from heaven, and a verification of miracles, and extraordinary supernatural effects. That the gift of healing, and preservation and restitution of life, was at first miraculous, needs no particular probation. All the story of the gospel is one entire argument to prove it: and amongst the fruits of the Spirit, St. Paul reckons "gifts of healing, and government, and helps," or exterior assistances and advantages; to represent, that it was intended the life of christian people should be happy and healthful for ever. Now, that this grace also descended afterwards in an ordinary ministry, is recorded by St. James: "Is any man sick amongst you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:" [p] that was then the ceremony, and the blessing and effect is still; for "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." For it is observable, that the blessing of healing and recovery is not appendant to the annealing, but to the prayer, of the church; to manifest, that the ceremony went with the first miraculous and extraordinary manner: yet that there was an ordinary ministry appointed for the daily conveyance of the blessing; the faithful prayers and offices of holy priests shall obtain life and health to such persons who are receptive of it, and in spiritual and apt dispositions. And when we see, by a continual flux of extraordinary benediction, that even some christian princes are instruments of the Spirit, not only in the government, but in the gifts of healing too, as a reward for their promoting the just interests of christianity; we may acknowledge ourselves convinced, that a holy life, in the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ, may be of great advantage for our health and life, by that instance to entertain our present desires, and to establish our hopes of life eternal. [q]

17. For I consider, that the fear of God is therefore the best antidote in the world against sickness and death, 1. Because it is the direct enemy to sin, which brought in sickness and death; and besides this, that God, by spiritual means, should produce alterations natural, is not hard to be understood by a christian philosopher, take him in either of the two capacities. 2. For there is a rule of proportion, and analogy of effects, that, if sin destroys not only the soul, but the body also, then may piety preserve both, and that much rather: for "if sin," that is, the effects and consequents of sin, "hath abounded, then shall grace superabound;" [r] that is, Christ hath done us more benefit than the fall of Adam hath done us injury; and, therefore, the effects of sin are not greater upon the body, than either are to be restored or prevented by a pious life. 3. There is so near a conjunction between soul and body, that it is no wonder, if God, meaning to glorify both by the means of a spiritual life, suffers spirit and matter to communicate in effects and mutual impresses. Thus the waters of baptism purify the soul; and the holy eucharist, not the symbolical, but the mysterious and spiritual part of it, makes the body also partaker of the death of Christ and a holy union. The flames of hell, whatsoever they are, torment accursed souls; and the stings of conscience vex and disquiet the body. 4. And if we consider, that, in the glories of heaven, when we shall live a life purely spiritual, our bodies also are so clarified and made spiritual, that they also become immortal; that state of glory being nothing else but a perfection of the state of grace, it is not unimaginable, but that the soul may have some proportion of the same operation upon the body, as to conduce to its prolongation, as to an antepast of immortality. 5. For since the body hath all its life from its conjunction with the soul, why not also the perfection of life, according to its present capacity, that is, health and duration, from the perfection of the soul, I mean, from the ornaments of grace? And as the blessedness of the soul (saith the philosopher) consists in the speculation of honest and just things; so the perfection of the body, and of the whole man, consists in the practice, the exercise, and operations of virtue.

18. But this problem in christian philosophy is yet more intelligible, and will be reduced to certain experience, if we consider good life in union and concretion with particular, material, and circumstantiate actions of piety: for these have great powers and instances, even in nature, to restore health and preserve our lives. Witness the sweet sleeps of temperate persons, and their constant appetite; which Timotheus, the son of Conon, observed, when he dieted in Plato's academy with severe and moderated diet: "They that sup with Plato, are well the next day." [s] Witness the symmetry of passions in meek men, their freedom from the violence of enraged and passionate indisposi-

[p] Jam. v. 14, 15.

[q] Futuræ nobis resurrectionis virorem in te Dominus ostendit, ut peccati sciamus esse, quòd cæteri adhuc viventes præmoriuntur in carne; justitiæ, quòd tu adolescentiam in aliena ætate mentiris.—S. HIERON. Paulo Concordiensi Vegeto et Pio Seni, lib. i. c. 8.

[r] Rom. v. 20.

[s] "Οτι ὁι παρὰ Πλάτωνι δειπνήσαντες καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ καλῶς γίνονται· Μήτε ἑορτὴν ἄλλο τι ἡγοῦνται, ἢ τὸ τὰ δίοντα πράττειν.—De Atheniensibus dictum apud Thucyd.

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tions, the admirable harmony and sweetness of content, which dwells in the retirements of a holy conscience; to which if we add those joys, which they only understand truly who feel them inwardly, the joys of the Holy Ghost, the content and joys which are attending upon the lives of holy persons, are most likely to make them long and healthful. "For now we live," saith St. Paul, "if ye stand fast in the Lord."[t] It would prolong St. Paul's life to see his ghostly children persevere in holiness; and if we understood the joys of it, it would do much greater advantage to ourselves. But if we consider a spiritual life abstractedly, and in itself, piety produces our life, not by a natural efficiency, but by Divine benediction. God gives a healthy and a long life, as a reward and blessing to crown our piety, even before the sons of men: "For such as be blessed of him, shall inherit the earth; but they that be cursed of him, shall be cut off."[u] So that this whole matter is principally to be referred to the act of God, either by ways of nature, or by instruments of special providence, rewarding picty with a long life. And we shall more fully apprehend this, if, upon the grounds of Scripture, reason, and experience, we weigh the contrary. "Wickedness" is the way to "shorten our days."[x]

19. Sin brought death in first; and yet man lived almost a thousand years. But he sinned more, and then death came nearer to him: for when all the world was first drowned in wickedness and then in water, God cut him shorter by one half, and five hundred years was his ordinary period. And man sinned still, and had strange imaginations, and built towers in the air; and then, about Peleg's time, God cut him shorter by one half yet, two hundred and odd years was his determination. And yet the generations of the world returned not unanimously to God; and God cut him off another half yet, and reduced him to one hundred and twenty years. And, by Moses's time, one half of the final remanent portion was pared away, reducing him to threescore years and ten; so that, unless it be by special dispensation, men live not beyond that term, or thereabout. But if God had gone on still in the same method, and shortened our days as we multiplied our sins, we should have been but as an ephemeron, man should have lived the life of a fly or a gourd; the morning should have seen his birth, his life have been the term of a day, and the evening must have provided him of a shroud. But God, seeing "man's thoughts were only evil continually," he was resolved no longer so to strive with him, nor destroy the kind, but punish individuals only, and single persons; and if they sinned, or if they did obey, regularly, their life should be proportionable. This God set down for his rule: "Evil shall slay the wicked person:"[y] and, "He that keepeth the commandments keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his own ways shall die."[z]

20. But that we may speak more exactly in this problem, we must observe, that, in Scripture, three general causes of natural death are assigned, nature, providence, and chance. By these three I only mean the several manners of Divine influence and operation. For God only predetermines; and what is changed in the following events by Divine permission, to this God and man, in their several manners, do co-operate. The saying of David concerning Saul, with admirable philosophy describes the three ways of ending man's life. "David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle, and perish."[a] The first is special providence. The second means the term of nature. The third is that which, in our want of words, we call chance or accident, but is, in effect, nothing else but another manner of the Divine providence. That, in all these, sin does interrupt and retrench our lives, is the undertaking of the following periods.

21. First: In nature, sin is a cause of dyscrasies and distempers, making our bodies healthless, and our days few.[b] For although God hath prefixed a period to nature, by an universal and antecedent determination, and that naturally every man that lives temperately, and by no supervening accident is interrupted, shall arrive thither; yet, because the greatest part of our lives is governed by will and understanding, and there are temptations to intemperance and to violations of our health, the period of nature is so distinct a thing from the period of our person, that few men attain to that, which God had fixed by his first law and preceding purpose, but end their days with folly, and in a period which God appointed them with anger, and a determination secondary, consequent, and accidental. And therefore, says David, "Health is far from the ungodly, for they regard not thy statutes." And to this purpose is that saying of Abenezra:[c] "He that is united to God, the fountain of life, his soul, being improved by grace, communicates to the body an establishment of its radical moisture and natural heat, to make it more healthful, that so it may be more instrumental to the spiritual operations and productions of the soul, and itself be preserved in perfect constitution." Now, how this blessing is contradicted by the impious life of a wicked person, is easy to be understood, if we consider, that from drunken surfeits[d] come dissolution of members,

[t] 1 Thess. iii. 8.
[u] Psalm xxxvii. 22.
[x] Prov. x. 27.
[y] Psalm xxxiv. 21.
[z] Prov. xix. 16.
[a] 1 Sam. xxvi. 10.

[b] Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.
Post ignem æthereâ domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors;
Semotique priùs tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.—Horat. lib. i. Carm. Od. 3.

[c] In Exod. xxiii. Quicunque unitur Deo, ipsi corroboratur calidum et humidum per vim animæ, et tunc vivit homo ultra limitatum tempus.

[d] Eubulus apud Athenæum, lib. vii. c. 1. introducit Bacchum loquentem in hunc modum:

Tres tantùm sanis ego crateras misceo:
Unum valetudinis, et hunc primum Œdipum;
Secundum amoris, et soporis tertium:
Quo, qui sapere solent, eunt hausto domum.
Nam quartus est haud ampliùs crater meus,
Sed contumeliæ; velut huic proximus
Clamoris, &c.

Nam plurimum vini inditum in vas parvulum
Sternit sine omni, quem replet, negotio.

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headachs, apoplexies, dangerous falls, fracture of bones, drenchings and dilution of the brain, inflammation of the liver, crudities of the stomach, and thousands more, which Solomon sums up in general terms: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath redness of eyes? they that tarry long at the wine."[e] I shall not need to instance, in the sad and uncleanly consequents of lust, the wounds and accidental deaths which are occasioned by jealousies, by vanity, by peevishness, vain reputation, and animosities, by melancholy, and the despair of evil consciences; and yet these are abundant argument, that when God so permits a man to run his course of nature, that himself does not intervene by an extraordinary influence, or any special acts of providence, but only gives his ordinary assistance to natural causes, a very great part of men make their natural period shorter, and by sin make their days miserable and few.

22. Secondly: Oftentimes Providence intervenes, and makes the way shorter; God, for the iniquity of man, not suffering nature to take her course, but stopping her in the midst of her journey. Against this David prayed: "O my God, cut me not off in the midst of my days."[f] But in this there is some variety. For God does it sometimes in mercy, sometimes in judgment. "The righteous die, and no man regardeth; not considering, that they are taken away from the evil to come."[g] God takes the righteous man hastily to his crown, lest temptation snatch it from him by interrupting his hopes and sanctity. And this was the case of the old world. For, from Adam to the flood, by the patriarchs, were eleven generations; but by Cain's line there were but eight, so that Cain's posterity were longer lived; because God intending to bring the flood upon the world, took delight to rescue his elect from the dangers of the present impurity, and the future deluge. Abraham lived five years less than his son Isaac, it being (say the doctors of the Jews) intended for mercy to him, that he might not see the iniquity of his grandchild Esau. And this the church, for many ages, hath believed, in the case of baptized infants dying before the use of reason. For, besides other causes in the order of Divine providence, one kind of mercy is done to them too; for although their condition be of a lower form, yet it is secured by that timely (shall I call it?) or untimely death. But these are cases extra-regular: ordinarily, and by rule, God hath revealed his purposes of interruption of the lives of sinners to be in anger and judgment; for when men commit any signal and grand impiety, God suffers not nature to take her course, but strikes a stroke with his own hand. To which purpose I think it a remarkable instance, which is reported by Epiphanius,[h] that, for 3332 years, even to the twentieth age, there was not one example of a son that died before his father, but the course of nature was kept, that he who was first born in the descending line, did die first; (I speak of natural death, and therefore Abel cannot be opposed to this observation;) till that Terah, the father of Abraham, taught the people to make images of clay, and worship them; and concerning him it was first remarked, that "Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity:"[i] God, by an unheard-of judgment, and a rare accident, punishing his newly invented crime. And whenever such intercision of a life happens to a vicious person, let all the world acknowledge it for a judgment; and when any man is guilty of evil habits, or unrepented sins, he may therefore expect it, because it is threatened and designed for the lot and curse of such persons. This is threatened to covetousness, injustice, and oppression. "As a partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool."[k] The same is threatened to voluptuous persons in the highest caresses of delight; and Christ told a parable with the same design. The rich man said, "Soul, take thy ease; but God answered, O fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." Zimri and Cozbi were slain in the trophies of their lust; and it was a sad story which was told by Thomas Cantipratanus: Two religious persons, tempted by each other, in the vigour of their youth, in their very first pleasures and opportunities of sin, were both struck dead in their embraces and posture of entertainment. God smote Jeroboam for his usurpation and tyranny, and he died.[l] Saul died for disobedience against God, and asking counsel of a Pythoness.[m] God smote Uzziah with a leprosy for his profaneness;[n] and distressed Ahaz sorely for his sacrilege;[o] and sent a horrid disease upon Jehoram for his idolatry.[p] These instances represent voluptuousness and covetousness, rapine and injustice, idolatry and lust, profaneness and sacrilege, as remarked by the signature of exemplary judgments, to be the means of shortening the days of man; God himself proving the executioner of his own fierce wrath. I instance no more, but in the singular case of Hananiah, the false prophet: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will cut thee from off the face of the earth; this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord."[q] That is the curse and portion of a false prophet, a short life, and a sudden death, of God's own particular and more immediate infliction.

23. And thus also the sentence of the Divine anger went forth upon criminal persons in the New Testament: witness the disease of Herod, Judas's hanging himself, the blindness of Elymas, the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, the buffetings with which Satan afflicted the bodies of persons excommunicate. Yea, the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is intended for our spiritual life, if it be unworthily received, proves the cause of a natural death: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are fallen asleep,"[r] saith St. Paul to the Corinthian church.

[e] Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. [f] Psal. cii. 24. [g] Isa. lvii. 1.
[h] Lib. i. tom. i. Panar. sect. 6. [i] Gen. xi. 28.
[k] Jer. xvii. 11. [l] 2 Chron. xiii. 20.
[m] 1 Chron. x. 13. [n] 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.
[o] 2 Kings xvi. [p] 2 Chron. xxi. 18.
[q] Jer. xxviii. 16. [r] 1 Cor. xi. 30.

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24. Thirdly: But there is yet another manner of ending man's life, by way of chance or contingency; meaning thereby the manner of God's providence, and event of things, which is not produced by the disposition of natural causes, nor yet by any particular and special act of God; but the event which depends upon accidental causes, not so certain and regular as nature, not so conclusive and determined as the acts of decretory providence, but comes, by disposition of causes irregular, to events rare and accidental. This David expresses by "entering into battle:" and in this, as in the other, we must separate cases extraordinary and rare from the ordinary and common. Extra-regularly, and upon extraordinary reasons and permissions, we find that holy persons have miscarried in battle. So the Israelites fell before Benjamin, and Jonathan, and Uriah, and many of the Lord's champions, fighting against the Philistines: but in these deaths, as God served other ends of providence, so he kept to the good men that fell all the mercies of the promise, by giving them a greater blessing of event and compensation. In the more ordinary course of Divine dispensation, they that prevaricate the laws of God are put out of protection; God withdraws his special providence, or their tutelar angel, and leaves them exposed to the influences of heaven, to the power of a constellation, to the accidents of humanity, to the chances of a battle, which are so many and various, that it is ten thousand to one a man in that case never escapes; and, in such variety of contingencies, there is no probable way to assure our safety, but by a holy life, to endear the providence of God to be our guardian. It was a remarkable saying of Deborah: "The stars fought in their courses," or "in their orbs, against Sisera."[s] Sisera fought when there was an evil aspect, or malignant influence of heaven, upon him. For even the smallest thing that is in opposition to us, is enough to turn the chance of a battle; that although it be necessary, for defence of the godly, that a special providence should intervene, yet, to confound the impious, no special act is requisite. If God exposes them to the ill aspect of a planet, or any other casualty, their days are interrupted, and they die. And that is the meaning of the prophet Jeremiah:[t] "Be not ye dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them;"[u] meaning, that God will overrule all inferior causes for the safety of his servants; but the wicked shall be exposed to chance and human accidents; and the signs of heaven, which of themselves do but signify, or, at most, but dispose and incline towards events, shall be enough to actuate and consummate their ruin. And this is the meaning of that proverb of the Jews, "Israel hath no planet:"[x] which they expounded to mean, if they observe the law, the planets shall not hurt them, God will overrule all their influences; but, if they prevaricate and rebel, the least star in the firmament of heaven shall bid them battle, and overthrow them. A stone shall lie in a wicked man's way, and God shall so expose him to it, leaving him so unguarded and defenceless, that he shall stumble at it, and fall, and break a bone, and that shall produce a fever, and the fever shall end his days. For not only every creature, when it is set on by God, can prove a ruin; but if we be not, by the providence of God, defended against it, we cannot behold the least atom in the sun, without danger of losing an eye, nor eat a grape without fear of choking, nor sneeze without breaking of a vein. And Arius, going to the ground, purged his entrails forth, and fell down unto the earth, and died. Such, and so miserable, is the great insecurity of a sinner. And of this Job had an excellent meditation: "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?" This is he that "dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet."[y]

25. I sum up this discourse with an observation, that is made concerning the family of Eli, upon which, for the remissness of discipline on the father's part, and for the impiety and profaneness of his sons, God sent this curse: "All the increase of their house shall die in the flower of their age."[z] According to that sad malediction, it happened for many generations; the heir of the family died as soon as he begat a son to succeed him: till the family, being wearied by so long a curse, by the counsel of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zachary, betook themselves universally to a sedulous and most devout meditation of the law, that is, to an exemplary devotion and strict religion: but then the curse was turned into a blessing, and the line masculine lived to an honourable old age. For the doctors of the Jews said, that God often changes his purposes concerning the death of man, when the sick person is "liberal in alms," or "fervent in prayer," or "changes his name," that is, gives up his name to God, by the serious purposes and religious vows of holy obedience. "He that followeth after righteousness" (alms it is in the vulgar Latin) "and mercy, findeth life;"[a] that verifies the first: and the fervent prayer of Hezekiah is a great instance of the second: and all the precedent discourse was intended for probation of the third, and proves that no disease is so deadly as a deadly sin; and the ways of righteousness are, therefore, advantages of health, and preservatives of life, (when health and

[s] Judges v. 20.
[t] Jer. x. 2.
[u] Gentes signa dierum et numerum mensis aut hebdomadæ cum metu superstitioso observârunt. Quarta luna infausta reputabatur, unde proverbium ἐν τετράδι γεγεννῆσθαι. Hujusmodi dies Græci ἀποφράδας vocant; Latini, *nefastos*. Hesiodus quintas omnino suspectas habet:

Πέμπτας δ' ἐξαλίασθαι, ἐπεὶ χαλεπαί τε καὶ αἰναί·
Ἐν πέμπτῃ γὰρ φασιν Ἐρινύας ἀμφιπολεύειν.

[x] Non est planeta Israeli.

Μία φυλακὴ ἡ εὐσέβεια· εὐσεβοῦς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου οὐ δαίμων κακὸς, οὔτε εἱμαρμένη κρατεῖ. Θεὸς γὰρ ῥύεται τὸν εὐσεβῆ ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ. τὸ γὰρ εὖ, καὶ μόνον εὖ, ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθόν, ἐστιν εὐσέβεια.—LACTANT.

Δύναται ὁ ἐπιστήμων πολλὰς ἀποστρέψαι ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀστέρων.—PTOLEM.

Id est, —— sapiens dominabitur astris.

[y] Job xxi. 17, 21, 23.
[z] 1 Sam. ii. 33.
[a] Prov. xxi. 21.

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ife are good for us,) because they are certain title o all God's promises and blessings.

26. Upon supposition of these premises, I con- ider, there is no cause to wonder, that tender per- ons and the softest women endure the violences of rt and physic, sharp pains of caustics and cupping- glasses, the abscission of the most sensible part, for preservation of a mutilous and imperfect body: but t is a wonder that, when God hath appointed a emedy in grace apt to preserve nature, and that a lying unto sin should prolong our natural life, yet ew men are willing to try the experiment; they will buy their life upon any conditions in the world but those, which are the best and easiest, any thing but religion and sanctity; although, for so doing, they are promised that immortality shall be added to the end of a long life, to make the life of a mor- tal partake of the eternal duration of an angel, or of God himself.

27. Fifthly: The last testimony of the excellency and gentleness of Christ's yoke, the fair load of christianity, is the reasonableness of it, and the unreasonableness of its contrary.[b] For whatsoever the wisest men in the world, in all nations and reli- gions, did agree upon, as most excellent in itself, and of greatest power to make political or future and immaterial felicities, all that, and much more, the holy Jesus adopted into his law: for they, re- ceiving sparks or single irradiations from the re- gions of light, or else having fair tapers shining indeed excellently in representations and expresses of morality, were all involved and swallowed up into the body of light, the sun of righteousness. Christ's discipline was the breviary of all the wis- dom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom; and there is nothing in the laws of our religion, but what is perfective of our spirits, excellent rules of religion, and rare expe- dients of obeying God by the nearest ways of imita- tion, and such duties which are the proper ways of doing benefits to all capacities and orders of men. But I remember my design now is not to represent christianity to be a better religion than any other; for I speak to christians, amongst whom we pre- suppose that: but I design to invite all christians in name to be such as they are called, upon the interest of such arguments, which represent the advantages of obedience to our religion, as it is commanded us by God. And this I shall do yet further, by consider- ing, as touching those christian names who apprehend religion as the fashion of their country, and know no other use of a church but customary, or secular and profane, that, supposing christian religion to have come from God, as we all profess to believe, there are no greater fools in the world, than such whose life conforms not to the pretence of their bap- tism and institution. They have all the signs and characters of fools, and indiscreet, unwary persons.

28. First: Wicked persons, like children and fools, choose the present, whatsoever it is, and neglect the infinite treasures of the future. They that have no faith nor foresight, have an excuse for snatching at what is now represented, because it is that *all* which can move them: but then such per- sons are infinitely distant from wisdom, whose un- derstanding neither reason nor revelation hath carried further than the present adherences; not only because they are narrow souls, who cannot look forward, and have nothing to distinguish them from beasts, who enjoy the present, being careless of what is to come; but also because whatsoever is present, is not fit satisfaction to the spirit, nothing but gluttings of the sense and sottish appetites.[c] Moses was a wise person; and so esteemed and reported by the Spirit of God, because "he despised the pleasures of Pharaoh's court, having an eye to the recompence of reward;" that is, because he despised all the present arguments of delight, and preferred those excellencies which he knew should be infinitely greater, as well as he knew they should be at all. He that would have rather chosen to stay in the theatre, and see the sports out, than quit the present spectacle, upon assurance to be adopted into Cæsar's family, had an offer made him too great for a fool; and yet his misfortune was not big enough for pity, because he understood nothing of his felicity, and rejected what he understood not. But he that prefers moments before eternity, and despises the infinite successions of eternal ages, that he may enjoy the present, not daring to trust God for what he sees not, and having no objects of his affections, but those which are the objects of his eyes, hath the impatience of a child, and the indis- cretion of a fool, and the faithlessness of an unbe- liever. The faith and hope of a christian are the graces and portions of spiritual wisdom, which Christ designed as an antidote against this folly.

29. Secondly: Children and fools choose to please their senses rather than their reason, because they still dwell within the regions of sense, and have but little residence amongst intellectual es- sences. And because the needs of nature first em- ploy our sensual appetites, these, being first in possession, would also fain retain it, and therefore, for ever continue their title, and perpetually fight for it: but because the inferior faculty, fighting against the superior, is no better than a rebel, and that it takes reason for its enemy, it shows such actions which please the sense, and do not please the reason, to be unnatural, monstrous, and unreason- able. And it is a great disreputation to the under- standing of a man, to be so cozened and deceived, as to choose money before a moral virtue; to please that which is common to him and beasts, rather than that part which is a communication of the Divine nature; to see him run after a bubble which himself hath made, and the sun hath particoloured, and to despise a treasure, which is offered to him, to call him off from pursuing that emptiness and nothing. But so does every vicious person; he feeds upon husks, and loathes manna; worships cats and onions, the beggarly and basest of Egyptian deities,

[b] Religio sapientiam adauget, et sapientia religionem.—LACTANT.
Σοφῷ γὰρ αἰσχρὸν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.—ÆSCHY. Prometh.

[c] Εἰ μὲν γὰρ πράττεις τι μεθ' ἡδονῆς αἰσχρὸν, ἡ μὲν ἡδονὴ παρῆλθε, τὸ δὲ κακὸν μένει.—HIEROCL.

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and neglects to adore and honour the eternal God; he prefers the society of drunkards before the communion of saints; or the fellowship of harlots before a quire of pure, chaste, and immaterial angels; the sickness and filth of luxury before the health and purities of chastity and temperance; a dish of red lentil pottage before a benison; drink before immortality, money before mercy, wantonness before the severe precepts of christian philosophy, earth before heaven, and folly before the crowns, and sceptres, and glories of a kingdom. Against this folly christian religion opposes contempt of things below, and setting our affections on things above.

30. Thirdly: Children and fools propound to themselves ends silly, low, and cheap; the getting of a nut-shell, or a bag of cherry-stones, a gaud to entertain the fancy of a few minutes; and, in order to such ends, direct their counsels and designs. And indeed in this they are innocent. But persons not living according to the discipline of christianity are as foolish in the designation of their ends; choosing things as unprofitable and vain to themselves, and yet with many mixtures of malice and injuriousness, both to themselves and others. His end is to cozen his brother of a piece of land, or to disgrace him by telling of a lie, to supplant his fortune, to make him miserable; ends which wise men and good men look upon as miseries and persecutions, instruments of affliction and regret; because every man is a member of a society, and hath some common terms of union and conjuncture, which make all the body susceptive of all accidents to any part. And it is a great folly, for pleasing of the eye, to snatch a knife which cuts our fingers; to bring affliction upon my brother or relative, which either must affect me, or else I am a useless, a base, or dead person. The ends of vice are ignoble and dishonourable; to discompose the quiet of a family, or to create jealousies, or to raise wars, or to make a man less happy, or apparently miserable, or to fish for the devil, and gain souls to our enemy, or to please a passion that undoes us, or to get something that cannot satisfy us: this is the chain of counsels, and the great aims of unchristian livers; they are all of them extreme great miseries. And it is a great indecency for a man to propound an end less and more imperfect than our present condition; as if we went about to unravel our present composure, and to unite every degree of essence and capacity, and to retire back to our first matter and unshapen state, hoping to get to our journey's end by going backwards. Against this folly the holy Jesus opposed the fourth beatitude, or precept, of "hungering and thirsting after righteousness."

31. Fourthly: But children and fools, whatever their ends be, they pursue them with as much weakness and folly as they first chose them with indiscretion; running to broken cisterns, or to puddles, to quench their thirst. When they are hungry, they make fantastic banquets, or put coloquintida into their pottage, that they may be furnished with pot herbs: or are like the ass that desired to flatter his master, and, therefore, fawned upon him like a spaniel, and bruised his shoulders. Such indecencies of means and prosecutions of interests we find in unchristian courses. It may be, they propound to themselves riches for their end, and they use covetousness for their means, and that brings nought home; or else they steal to get it, and they are apprehended, and made to restore fourfold. Like moths gnawing a garment, they devour their own house, and, by greediness of desire, they destroy their content, making impatience the parent and instrument of all their felicity.[d] Or they are so greedy and imaginative, and have raised their expectation by an over-valuing esteem of temporary felicities, that when they come, they fall short of their promises, and are indeed less than they would have been, by being, before-hand, apprehended greater than they could be. If their design be to represent themselves innocent and guiltless of a suspicion or a fault, they deny the fact, and double it. When they would repair their losses, they fall to gaming; and, besides that they are infinitely full of fears, passions, wrath, and violent disturbances, in the various chances of their game, that which they use to restore their fortune ruins even the little remnant, and condemns them to beggary, or what is worse. Thus evil men seek for content out of things that cannot satisfy, and take care to get that content; that is, they raise war to enjoy present peace, and renounce all content to get it; they strive to depress their neighbours, that they may be their equals; to disgrace them, to get reputation to themselves; (which arts, being ignoble, do them the most disparagement;) and resolve never to enter into the felicities of God by content taken in the prosperities of man: which is making ourselves wretched by being wicked. Malice and envy is indeed a mighty curse; and the devil can show us nothing more foolish and unreasonable than envy, which is, in its very formality, a curse, an eating of coals and vipers, because my neighbour's table is full, and his cup is crowned with health and plenty. The christian religion, as it chooseth excellent ends, so it useth proportionate and apt means. The most contradictory accident in the world, when it becomes hallowed by a pious and christian design, becomes a certain means of felicity and content. To quit our lands for Christ's sake, will certainly make us rich; to depart from our friends, will increase our relations and beneficiaries: but the striving to secure our temporal interests, by any other means than obedient actions, or obedient sufferings, is declared, by the holy Jesus, to be the greatest improvidence and ill husbandry in the world. Even in this world, Christ will repay us an hundred-fold for all our losses, which we suffer for the interests of christianity. In the same proportion we find, that all graces do the work of human felicities, with a more certain power and infallible effect than their contraries. Gratitude endears benefits, and procures more friendships; confession gets a pardon; impudence and lying doubles the fault, and exasperates the offended per-

[d] Τὰ δεινὰ κέρδη πημονὰς ἐργάζεται.—SOPHOCL. Antig.
Hos felicitas ingrata superfluit, ut semper pleni spei, vacui commodorum, præsentibus careant, dum futura prospectant. —Panegyr. ad Constant. Filium.

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son; innocence is bold, and rocks a man asleep; but an evil conscience is a continual alarm. Against this folly, of using disproportionate means in order to their ends, the holy Jesus hath opposed the eight beatitudes, which, by contradictions of nature and improbable causes, according to human and erring estimate, bring our best and wisest ends to pass infallibly and divinely.

32. But this is too large a field to walk in: for it represents all the flatteries of sin to be a mere cozenage and deception of the understanding; and we find, by this scrutiny, that evil and unchristian persons are infinitely unwise, because they neglect the counsel of their superiors and their guides. They dote passionately upon trifles; they rely upon false foundations and deceiving principles; they are most confident when they are most abused; they are like shelled fish, singing loudest when their house is on fire about their ears, and being merriest when they are most miserable and perishing; when they have the option of two things, they ever choose the worst; they are not masters of their own actions, but break all purposes at the first temptation; they take more pains to do themselves a mischief than would secure heaven; that is, they are rude, ignorant, foolish, unwary, and undiscerning people, in all senses, and to all purposes; and are incurable, but by their obedience and conformity to the holy Jesus, the eternal Wisdom of the Father.

33. Upon the strength of these premises, the yoke of christianity must needs be apprehended light, though it had in it more pressure than it hath; because lightness or heaviness, being relative terms, are to be esteemed by comparison to others. Christianity is far easier than the yoke of Moses's law, not only because it consists of fewer rites, but also, because those perfecting and excellent graces, which integrate the body of our religion, are made easy by God's assisting, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: and we may yet make it easier, by love and by fear, which are the proper products of the evangelical promises and threatenings. For I have seen persons in affrightment have carried burdens, and leaped ditches, and climbed walls, which their natural power could never have done. And if we understood the sadnesses of a cursed eternity, from which we are commanded to fly, and yet knew how near we are to it, and how likely to fall into it, it would create fears greater than a sudden fire, or a midnight alarm. And those unhappy souls who come to feel this truth, when their condition is without remedy, are made the more miserable by the apprehension of their stupid folly. For certainly the accursed spirits feel the smart of hell once doubled upon them, by considering by what vain, unsatisfying trifles they lost their happiness, with what pains they perished, and with how great ease they might have been beatified. And certain it is, christian religion hath so furnished us with assistances, both exterior and interior, both of persuasion and advantages, that whatsoever Christ hath doubled upon us in perfection, he hath alleviated in aids.

34. And then, if we compare the state of christianity with sin, all the preceding discourses were intended to represent how much easier it is to be a christian than a vile and wicked person. And he that remembers, that whatever fair allurements may be pretended as invitations to a sin, are such false and unsatisfying pretences, that they drive a man to repent him of his folly, and, like a great laughter, end in a sigh, and expire in weariness and indignation; must needs confess himself a fool, for doing that which he knows will make him repent that he ever did it. A sin makes a man afraid when it thunders; and, in all dangers, the sin detracts the visor, and affrights him, and visits him when he comes to die, upbraiding him with guilt, and threatening misery. So that christianity is the easiest law, and the easiest state; it is more perfect and less troublesome; it brings us to felicity by ways proportionable, landing us in rest by easy and unperplexed journeys. This discourse I, therefore, thought necessary, because it reconciles our religion with those passions and desires, which are commonly made the instruments and arguments of sin. For we rarely meet with such spirits which love virtue so metaphysically, as to abstract her from all sensible and delicious compositions, and love the purity of the idea. St. Louis, the king, sent Ivo, bishop of Chartres, on an embassy; and he told, that he met a grave matron on the way, with fire in one hand, and water in the other; and, observing her to have a melancholic, religious, and fantastic deportment and look, asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water? She answered, "My purpose is, with the fire to burn paradise, and, with my water, to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God." Whether the woman were only imaginative and sad, or also zealous, I know not. But God knows he would have few disciples, if the arguments of invitation were not of greater promise than the labours of virtue are of trouble. And, therefore, the Spirit of God, knowing to what we are inflexible, and by what we are made most ductile and malleable, hath propounded virtue clothed and dressed with such advantages, as may entertain even our sensitive part and first desires,[e] that those also may be invited to virtue, who understand not what is just and reasonable, but what is profitable; who are more moved with advantage than justice. And because emolument is more felt than innocence, and a man may be poor for all his gift of chastity; the holy Jesus, to endear the practices of religion, hath represented godliness to us under the notion of "gain," and "sin as unfruitful:" and yet, besides all the natural and reasonable advantages, every virtue hath a supernatural reward, a gracious pro-

[e] ——Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam
Præmia si tollas? JUV.
Sublatis studiorum pretiis, etiam studia peritura, ut minùs decora.—TACIT.

Vide Ciceron. Tuscul. ii. Lact. lib. iii. c. 27. Instit.
Virtus per seipsam non beata est, quoniam in perferendis, ut dixi, malis tota vis ejus est.—Idem, c. 12. AUG. Ep. 12.

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mise attending; and every vice is not only naturally deformed, but is made more ugly by a threatening, and horrid by an appendant curse. Henceforth, therefore, let no man complain, that the commandments of God are impossible; for they are not only possible, but easy; and they that say otherwise, and do accordingly, take more pains to carry the instruments of their own death, than would serve to ascertain them of life. And if we would do as much for Christ as we have done for sin, we should find the pains less, and the pleasure more. And, therefore, such complainers are without excuse; for certain it is, they that can go in foul ways, must not say they cannot walk in fair: they that march over rocks, in despite of so many impediments, can travel the even ways of religion and peace, when the holy Jesus is their guide, and the Spirit is their guardian, and infinite felicities are at their journey's end, and all the reason of the world, political, economical, and personal, do entertain and support them in the travel of the passage.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who gavest laws unto the world, that mankind, being united to thee by the bands of obedience, might partake of all thy glories and felicities; open our understanding, give us the spirit of discerning, and just apprehension of all the beauties with which thou hast enamelled virtue, to represent it beauteous and amiable in our eyes; that, by the allurements of exterior decencies and appendant blessings, our present desires may be entertained, our hopes promoted, our affections satisfied, and love, entering in by these doors, may dwell in the interior regions of the will. O make us to love thee for thyself, and religion for thee, and all the instruments of religion in order to thy glory and our own felicities. Pull off the visors of sin, and discover its deformities, by the lantern of thy word, and the light of the Spirit; that I may never be bewitched with sottish appetites. Be pleased to build up all the contents I expect in this world, upon the interests of a virtuous life, and the support of religion; that I may be rich in good works, content in the issues of thy providence, my health may be the result of temperance and severity, my mirth in spiritual emanations, my rest in hope, my peace in a good conscience, my satisfaction and acquiescence in thee; that from content I may pass to an eternal fulness, from health to immortality, from grace to glory; walking in the paths of righteousness, by the waters of comfort, to the land of everlasting rest; to feast in the glorious communications of eternity, eternally adoring, loving, and enjoying the infinity of the ever-blessed and mysterious Trinity; to whom be glory, and honour, and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVI.

Of Certainty of Salvation.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus took an account of the first legation and voyage of his apostles, he found them rejoicing in privileges and exterior powers, in their authority over unclean spirits; but weighing it in his balance, he found the cause too light, and, therefore, diverted it upon the right object: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."[a] The revelation was confirmed, and more personally applied, in answer to St. Peter's question, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have, therefore?" Their Lord answered, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Amongst these persons, to whom Christ spake, Judas was; he was one of the twelve, and he had a throne allotted for him; his name was described in the book of life, and a sceptre and a crown were deposited for him too. For we must not judge of Christ's meaning by the event, since he spake these words to produce in them faith, comfort, and joy, in the best objects: it was a sermon of duty, as well as a homily of comfort; and, therefore, was equally intended to all the college: and since the number of thrones is proportioned to the number of men, it is certain there was no exception of any man there included; and yet it is as certain Judas never came to sit upon the throne, and his name was blotted out of the book of life. Now, if we put these ends together, that in Scripture it was not revealed to any man concerning his final condition, but to the dying penitent thief, and to the twelve apostles, that twelve thrones were designed for them, and a promise made of their enthronization; and yet that no man's final estate is so clearly declared miserable and lost, as that of Judas, one of the twelve, to whom a throne was promised; the result will be, that the election of holy persons is a condition allied to duty, absolute and infallible in the general, and supposing all the dispositions and requisites concurring; but fallible in the particular, if we fall off from the mercies of the covenant, and prevaricate the conditions. But the thing which is most observable is, that if in persons so eminent and privileged, and to whom a revelation of their election was made as a particular grace, their condition had one weak leg, upon which because it did rely for one half of the interest, it could be no stronger than its supporters; the condition of lower persons, to whom no revelation is made, no privileges are indulged, no greatness of spiritual eminence is appendant, as they have no greater certainty in the thing, so they have less in person; and are, therefore, to "work out their salvation with" great "fears and tremblings" of spirit.

2. The purpose of this consideration is, that we

[a] Ad Num. 17.

[b] Quod dixit Jesus 72 discipulis, [Lucæ x. 20.] eorum nomina descripta esse in cœlo; prædestinationem licet aliquatenus denotet, non tamen ad gloriam, sed ad munus evangelicum et ministerium in regno. Alii autem verba illa non rem facti denotare, sed causam gaudii tantùm enarrare justam et legitimam; ex suppositione scil. et quando hoc contigerit, aut ad effectum perducetur. Utcunque autem verba significent, certum est doctores ecclesiæ non paucos tradidisse 72 discipulos Christum reliquisse, nec rediisse denuo.

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do not judge of our final condition by any discourses of our own, relying upon God's secret counsels, and predestination of eternity. This is a mountain upon which whosoever climbs, like Moses, to behold the land of Canaan at great distances, may please his eyes, or satisfy his curiosity, but is certain never to enter that way. It is like inquiring into fortunes, concerning which Phavorinus, the philosopher, spake not unhandsomely;[b] "They that foretell events of destiny and secret providence, either foretell sad things or prosperous. If they promise prosperous, and deceive, you are made miserable by a vain speculation. If they threaten ill fortune, and say false, thou art made wretched by a false fear. But if they foretell adversity, and say true, thou art made miserable by thy own apprehension, before thou art so by destiny; and many times the fear is worse than the evil feared. But if they promise felicities, and promise truly what shall come to pass, then thou shalt be wearied by an impatience and a suspended hope, and thy hope shall ravish and deflower the joys of thy possession."[c] Much of it is hugely applicable to the present question; and our blessed Lord, when he was petitioned that he would grant to the two sons of Zebedee, that they might sit one on the right hand and the other on the left in his kingdom, rejected their desire, and only promised them what concerned their duty and their suffering; referring them to that, and leaving the final event of men to the disposition of his Father. This is the great secret of the kingdom, which God hath locked up and sealed with the counsels of eternity. "The sure foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his."[d] This seal shall never be broken up till the great day of Christ; in the mean time, the Divine knowledge is the only repository of the final sentences, and this "way of God is unsearchable, and past finding out." And, therefore, if we be solicitous and curious to know what God, in the counsels of eternity, hath decreed concerning us; he hath, in two fair tables, described all those sentences from whence we must take accounts, the revelations of Scripture, and the book of conscience. The first recites the law and the conditions; the other gives in evidence: the first is clear, evident, and conspicuous; the other, when it is written with large characters, may also be discerned; but there are many little accents, periods, distinctions, and little significations of actions, which either are there written in water, or sullied over with carelessness, or blotted with forgetfulness, or not legible by ignorance, or misconstrued by interest and partiality, that it will be extremely difficult to read the hand upon the wall, or to copy out one line of the eternal sentence. And, therefore, excellent was the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are in secret."[e] For whatsoever God hath revealed in general concerning election, it concerns all persons within the pale of christianity. He hath conveyed notice to all christian people, that they are the sons of God, that they are the heirs of eternity, "co-heirs with Christ, partakers of the Divine nature;" meaning, that such they are by the design of God, and the purposes of the manifestation of his Son. The election of God is disputed in Scripture, to be an act of God separating whole nations, and rejecting others; in each of which, many particular instances there were contrary to the general and universal purpose; and of the elect nations, many particulars perished, and many of the rejected people "sat down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:" and to those persons to whom God was more particular, and was pleased to show the scrolls of his eternal counsels, and to reveal their particular elections, as he did to the twelve apostles, he showed them wrapped up and sealed; and, to take off their confidences or presumptions, he gave probation, in one instance, that those scrolls may be cancelled, that his purpose concerning particulars may be altered by us; and, therefore, that he did not discover the bottom of the abyss, but some purposes of special grace and indefinite design. But his peremptory, final, unalterable decree, he keeps in the cabinets of the eternal ages, never to be unlocked, till the angel of the covenant shall declare the unalterable, universal sentence.

3. But, as we take the measure of the course of the sun by the dimensions of the shadows made by our own bodies, or our own instruments; so must we take the measures of eternity by the span of a man's hand, and guess at what God decrees of us, by considering how our relations and endearments are to him. And it is observable, that all the confidences which the Spirit of God hath created in the elect, are built upon duty, and stand or fall according to the strength or weakness of such supporters. "We know we are translated from death to life, by our love unto the brethren:"[f] meaning that the performance of our duty is the best consignation to eternity, and the only testimony God gives us of our election. And, therefore, we are to make our judgments accordingly. And here I consider, that there is no state of a christian, in which, by virtue of the covenant of the gospel, it is effectively and fully declared, that his sins are actually pardoned, but only in baptism, at our first coming to Christ; when he "redeems us from our vain conversation;" when he makes us become "sons of God;" when he "justifies us freely by his grace," when we are purified by faith, when we make a covenant with Christ, to live for ever according to his laws. And this I shall suppose I have already proved and explicated, in the Discourse

[b] Ad scelus ab hujusmodi votis facillimè transitur.—TACIT.
——— Nos parvum ac debile vulgus
Scrutamur penitus Superos: hinc pallor et iræ,
Hinc scelus, insidiæque, et nulla modestia voti.—STATIUS.

[c] Futurum gaudii fructum spes tibi jam præfloraverit.—A. GELLIUS, lib. xiv.

[d] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[e] Ecclus. iii. 21, 22.

[f] 1 John iii. 14.

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of Repentance. So that whoever is certain he hath not offended God since that time, and in nothing transgresseth the laws of christianity, he is certain that he actually remains in the state of baptismal purity: but it is too certain, that this certainty remains not long; but we commonly throw some dirt into our waters of baptism, and stain our white robe which we then put on.

4. But then, because our restitution to this state is a thing that consists of so many parts, is so divisible, various, and uncertain whether it be arrived to the degree of innocence; (and our innocence consists in a mathematical point, and is not capable of degrees any more than unity, because one stain destroys our being innocent;) it is, therefore, a very difficult matter to say, that we have done all our duty towards our restitution to baptismal grace; and if we have not done all that we can do, it is harder to say that God hath accepted that, which is less than the conditions we entered into, when we received the great justification and pardon of sins. We all know we do less than our duty, and we hope that God makes abatements for human infirmities; but we have but a few rules to judge by, and they not infallible in themselves, and we yet more fallible in the application, whether we have not mingled some little minutes of malice in the body of infirmities, and how much will bear excuse; and in what time, and to what persons, and to what degrees, and upon what endeavours, we shall be pardoned. So that all the interval, between our losing baptismal grace and the day of our death, we walk in a cloud; having lost the certain knowledge of our present condition, by our prevarications. And, indeed, it is a very hard thing for a man to know his own heart: and he that shall observe, how often himself hath been abused by confidences and secret imperfections, and how the greatest part of christians, in name only, do think themselves in a very good condition, when God knows they are infinitely removed from it; (and yet, if they did not think themselves well and sure, it is unimaginable they should sleep so quietly, and walk securely, and consider negligently, and yet proceed confidently;) he that considers this, and upon what weak and false principles of divinity men have raised their strengths and persuasions, will easily consent to this; that it is very easy for men to be deceived, in taking estimate of their present condition, of their being in the state of grace.

5. But there is great variety of men, and difference of degrees; and every step of returning to God may reasonably add one degree of hope, till at last it comes to the certainty and top of hope. Many men believe themselves to be in the state of grace, and are not; many are in the state of grace, and are infinitely fearful they are out of it; and many that are in God's favour, do think they are so, and they are not deceived. And all this is certain. For some sin that sin of presumption, and flattery of themselves, and some good persons are vexed with violent fears and temptations to despair, and all are not: and when their hopes are right, yet some are strong, and some are weak; for they that are well persuaded of their present condition, have persuasions as different as are the degrees of their approach to innocence; and he that is at the highest, hath also such abatements, which are apt and proper for the conservation of humility and godly fear. "I am guilty of nothing," (saith St. Paul,) "but I am not hereby justified;"[g] meaning thus: Though I be innocent, for aught I know, yet God, who judges otherwise than we judge, may find something to reprove in me: "It is God that judges," that is, concerning my degrees of acceptance and hopes of glory. If the person be newly recovering from a state of sin, because his state is imperfect, and his sin not dead, and his lust active, and his habit not quite extinct, it is easy for a man to be too hasty in pronouncing well. He is wrapt up in a cloak of clouds, hidden and encumbered;[h] and his brightest day is but twilight, and his discernings dark, conjectural, and imperfect; and his heart is like a cold hand newly applied to the fire, full of pain, and whether the heat or the cold be strongest, is not easy to determine; or like middle colours, which no man can tell to which of the extremes they are to be accounted. But according as persons grow in grace, so they may grow in confidence of their present condition. It is not certain they will do so; for sometimes the beauty of their tabernacle is covered with goats' hair and skins of beasts, and holy people do infinitely deplore the want of such graces, which God observes in them with great complacency and acceptance. Both these cases say, that to be certainly persuaded of our present condition is not a duty: sometimes it is not possible, and sometimes it is better to be otherwise. But if we consider of this certainty, as a blessing and a reward, there is no question but, in a great and an eminent sanctity of life, there may also be a great confidence and fulness of persuasion, that our present being is well and gracious, and then it is certain that such persons are not deceived. For the thing itself being sure, if the persuasion answers to it, it is needless to dispute of the degree of certainty and the manner of it. Some persons are heartily persuaded of their being reconciled; and of these, some are deceived, and some are not deceived; and there is no sign to distinguish them, but by that which is the thing signified: a holy life, according to the strict rules of christian discipline, tells what persons are confident, and who are presumptuous. But the certainty is reasonable in none but in old christians, habitually holy persons; not in new converts, or in lately lapsed people: for, concerning them, we find the Spirit of God speaking with clauses of restraint and ambiguity; "a perhaps,"[i] and, "who knoweth," and, "peradventure, the thoughts of thy heart may

[g] 1 Cor. iv. 4.
Cùm multis in rebus offendamus Deum, majorem tamen offensarum partem ne intelligimus quidem; idcirco ait apostolus, Nihil conscius sum, &c. q. d. Multa delicta committo, quæ committere me non intelligo. Propter hanc causam propheta ait, Delicta quis intelligit?—S. BASIL. c. 2. Monast. Constit.

[h] Eccles. ix. 1, 2.

[i] Beatus Daniel, præscius futurorum, de sententiâ Dei dubitat. Rem temerariam faciunt, qui audacter veniam pollicentur peccantibus.—S. HIERON. Dan. iv. 27. Joel ii. 14. Acts viii. 22.

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be forgiven thee;" God may have mercy on thee. And that God hath done so, they only have reason to be confident, whom God hath blessed with a lasting, continuing piety, and who have wrought out the habits of their precontracted vices.

6. But we find, in Scripture, many precepts given to holy persons, being in the state of grace, to secure their standing, and perpetuate their present condition. For, "He that endureth unto the end, he" only "shall be saved,"[k] said our blessed Saviour: and, "He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall:"[l] and, "Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear:"[m] and, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling."[n] "Hold fast that thou hast, and let no man take thy crown from thee."[o] And it was excellent advice; for one church had "lost their first love,"[p] and was likely also to lose their crown. And St. Paul himself, who had once entered within the veil, and seen unutterable glories, yet was forced to endure hardship, and to fight against his own disobedient appetite, and to do violence to his inclinations; for fear that, "whilst he preached to others, himself should become a cast-away." And since we observe, in holy story, that Adam and Eve fell in paradise, and the angels fell in heaven itself, stumbling at the very jewels which pave the streets of the celestial Jerusalem; and in Christ's family, one man, for whom his Lord had prepared a throne, turned devil; and that, in the number of the deacons, it is said that one turned apostate, who yet had been a man full of the Holy Ghost: it will lessen our train, and discompose the gaieties of our present confidence, to think that our securities cannot be really distinguished from danger and uncertainties. For every man walks upon two legs: one is firm, invariable, constant, and eternal; but the other is his own. God's promises are the objects of our faith; but the events and final conditions of our souls, which are consequent to our duty, can, at the best, be but the objects of our hope. And either there must in this be a less certainty, or else faith and hope are not two distinct graces. God's gifts and vocations "are without repentance;"[q] meaning, on God's part: but the very people, concerning whom St. Paul used the expression, were reprobate and cut off, and in good time, shall be called again; in the mean time, many single persons perish. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."[r] God will look to that, and it will never fail; but then they must secure the following period, and "not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Behold the goodness of God towards thee," saith St. Paul, "if thou continue in his good; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."[s] And if this be true, concerning the whole church of the gentiles, to whom the apostle then made the address, and concerning whose election the decree was public and manifest, that they might be cut off, and their abode in God's favour was upon condition of their perseverance in the faith; much more is it true in single persons, whose election, in particular, is shut up in the abyss, and permitted to the condition of our faith and obedience, and the revelations of doomsday.

7. Certain it is, that God hath given to holy persons "the Spirit of adoption," enabling them to "cry, Abba, Father,"[t] and to account themselves for sons; and by this "Spirit we know we dwell in him:"[u] and, therefore, it is called in Scripture, "the earnest of the Spirit:"[x] though, at its first mission, and when the apostle wrote and used this appellative, the Holy Ghost was of greater signification, and a more visible earnest and endearment of their hopes, than it is to most of us since. For the visible sending of the Holy Ghost upon many believers, in gifts, signs, and prodigies, was an infinite argument to make them expect events, as great beyond that, as that was beyond the common gifts of men: just as miracles and prophecy, which are gifts of the Holy Ghost, were arguments of probation for the whole doctrine of christianity. And this being a mighty verification of the great promise, the promise of the Father, was an apt instrument to raise their hopes and confidences, concerning those other promises which Jesus made, the promises of immortality and eternal life, of which the present miraculous graces of the Holy Spirit were an earnest, and in the nature of a contracting penny: and still, also, the Holy Ghost, though in another manner, is "an earnest of the great price of the heavenly calling," the rewards of heaven; though not so visible and apparent as at first, yet as certain and demonstrative, where it is discerned, or where it is believed, as it is and ought to be in every person, who does any part of his duty; because, by the Spirit we do it, and without him we cannot. And since we either feel or believe the presence and gifts of the Holy Ghost to holy purposes, (for whom we receive voluntarily, we cannot easily receive without a knowledge of his reception,) we cannot but entertain him, as an argument of greater good hereafter, and an earnest-penny of the perfection of the present grace, that is, of the rewards of glory; glory and grace differing no otherwise, than as an earnest, in part of payment, does from the whole price, "the price of our high calling." So that the Spirit is an earnest, not because he always signifies to us, that we are actually in the state of grace, but by way of argument or reflection; we know we do belong to God, when we receive his Spirit; (and all christian people have received him, if they were rightly baptized and confirmed;) I say, we know, by that testimony, that we belong to God; that is, we are the people with whom God hath made a covenant, to whom he hath promised and intends greater blessings, to which the present gifts of the Spirit are in order. But all this is conditional, and is not an immediate testimony of the certainty and future event; but of the event, as it is possibly future, and may, (without our fault,) be reduced to act as certainly as it is promised, or as the earnest is given in hand. And this the Spirit of God oftentimes tells us, in

[k] Matt. xxiv. 13. [l] 1 Cor. x. 12.
[m] Rom. xi. 20. [n] Phil. ii. 12.
[o] Rev. iii. 11. [p] Chap. ii. 4.
[q] Rom. xi. 29. [r] Rom. viii. 1.
[s] Rom. xi. 22. [t] Rom. viii. 15.
[u] 1 John iv. 13. [x] 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5.

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secret visitations and public testimonies: and this is that which St. Paul calls, "tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking of the Holy Ghost," and "tasting of the good work of God, and the powers of the world to come."[y] But yet, some that have done so have fallen away, and have "quenched the Spirit," and have given back the earnest of the Spirit, and contracted new relations; and God hath been their Father no longer, for they have done the works of the devil. So that, if new converts be uncertain of their present state, old christians are not absolutely certain they shall persevere. They are as sure of it, as they can be of future acts of theirs, which God hath permitted to their own power. But this certainly cannot exclude all fear, till their charity be perfect: only according to the strength of their habits, so is the confidence of their abodes in grace.

8. Beyond this, some holy persons have degrees of persuasion, superadded as largesses and acts of grace; God loving to bless one degree of grace with another, till it comes to a confirmation in grace, which is a state of salvation directly opposite to obduration; and as this is irremediable and irrecoverable, so is the other inadmissible: as God never saves a person obdurate and obstinately impenitent, so he never loses a man, whom he hath confirmed in grace;[z] "whom he" so "loves, he loves unto the end;" and to others, indeed, he offers his persevering love, but they will not entertain it with a persevering duty, they will not be beloved unto the end. But I insert this caution, that every man, that is in this condition of a confirmed grace, does not always know it; but sometimes God draws aside the curtains of peace, and shows him his throne, and visits him with irradiations of glory, and sends him a little star to stand over his dwelling, and then again covers it with a cloud. It is certain, concerning some persons, that they shall never fall, and that God will not permit them to the danger or probability of it: to such it is morally impossible: but these are but few, and themselves know it not, as they know a demonstrative proposition, but as they see the sun, sometimes breaking from a cloud very brightly, but all day long giving necessary. and sufficient light.

9. Concerning the multitude of believers, this discourse is not pertinent; for they only take their own accounts by the imperfections of their own duty, blended with the mercies of God: the cloud gives light on one side, and is dark upon the other; and sometimes a bright ray peeps through the fringes of a shower, and immediately hides itself: that we might be humble and diligent; striving forwards, and looking upwards; endeavouring our duty, and longing after heaven; "working out our salvation with fear and trembling;" and, in good time, "our calling and election" may be assured, when we first, according to the precept of the apostle, "use all diligence." St. Paul, when he writ his first epistle to the Corinthians, was more fearful of being reprobate;[a] and, therefore, he used exterior arts of mortification. But when he writ to the Romans, which was a good while after, we find him more confident of his final condition; "persuaded, that neither height, nor depth, angel, nor principality, nor power could separate him from the love of God, in Jesus Christ:"[b] and when he grew to his latter end, when he wrote to St. Timothy, he was more confident yet, and declared, that now a "crown of righteousness was," certainly, "laid up for him;" for now he had "fought the fight, and finished his course, the time of his departure was at hand."[c] Henceforth he knew no more fear; his love was perfect as this state would permit, and that "cast out all fear." According to this precedent, if we reckon our securities, we are not likely to be reproved by any words of Scripture, or by the condition of human infirmity. But when the confidence outruns our growth of grace, it is itself a sin; though, when the confidence is equal with the grace, it is of itself no regular and universal duty, but a blessing and a reward, indulged by special dispensation, and in order to personal necessities, or accidental purposes. For only so much hope is simply necessary, as excludes despair, and encourages our duty, and glorifies God, and entertains his mercy; but that the hope should be without fear, is not given, but to the highest faith, and the most excellent charity, and to habitual, ratified, and confirmed christians; and to them, also, with some variety. The sum is this: all that are in the state of beginners and imperfection, have a conditional certainty, changeable and fallible in respect of us, (for we meddle not with what it is in God's secret purposes,) changeable, I say, as their wills and resolutions. They that are grown towards perfection, have more reason to be confident, and many times are so; but still, although the strength of the habits of grace adds degrees of moral certainty to their expectation, yet it is but as their condition is, hopeful and promising, and of a moral determination. But to those few, to whom God hath given confirmation in grace, he hath also given a certainty of condition; and, therefore, if that be revealed to them, their persuasions are certain and infallible. If it be not revealed to them, their condition is in itself certain, but their persuasion is not so; but in the highest kind of hope, "an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, whose counsels are in the great deep, and thy ways past finding out; thou hast built our faith upon thy promises, our hopes upon thy goodness, and hast described our paths between the waters of comfort and the dry, barren land of our own duties and affections: we acknowledge that all our comforts derive from thee, and to ourselves we owe all our shame, and confusions, and degrees of desperation. Give us the assistances of the Holy Ghost, to help us in per-

[y] Heb. vi. 4, 5.
[z] ——— Hic felix, nullo turbante deorum;
Is, nullo parcente, miser ———

[a] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[b] Rom. viii. 38, 39.
[c] 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

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forming our duty; and give us those comforts and visitations of the Holy Ghost, which thou, in thy infinite and eternal wisdom, knowest most apt and expedient, to encourage our duties, to entertain our hopes, to alleviate our sadnesses, to refresh our spirits, and to endure our abode and constant endeavours, in the strictnesses of religion and sanctity. Lead us, dearest God, from grace to grace, from imperfection to strength, from acts to habits, from habits to confirmation in grace, that we may also pass into the region of comfort, receiving the earnest of the Spirit, and the adoption of sons; till, by such a signature, we be consigned to glory, and enter into the possession of the inheritance, which we expect in the kingdom of thy Son, and in the fruition of the felicities of thee, O gracious Father, God eternal. Amen.

SECTION XIV.

Of the Third Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. BUT Jesus, knowing of the death of the Baptist, Herod's jealousy, and the envy of the Pharisees, retired into a desert place, beyond the lake, together with his apostles; for the people pressed so upon them, they had not leisure to eat. But neither there could he be hid; but great multitudes flocked thither also, to whom he preached many things. And afterwards, because there were no villages in the neighbourhood, lest they should faint in their return to their houses, he caused them "to sit down upon the grass," and, with "five loaves of barley, and two small fishes, he satisfied five thousand men, besides women and children," and caused the disciples to "gather up the fragments," which, being amassed together, "filled twelve baskets." Which miracles had so much proportion to the understanding, and met so happily with the affections of the people, that they were convinced that this was the "Messias, who was to come into the world," and had a purpose to have "taken him by force, and made him a king."

2. But he that left his Father's kingdom to take upon him the miseries and infelicities of the world, fled from the offers of a kingdom, and their tumultuary election, as from an enemy; and, therefore, sending his disciples to the ship to go before towards Bethsaida, he ran into the mountains, to hide himself, till the multitude should scatter to their several habitations; he, in the mean time, taking the opportunity of that retirement for the advantage of his prayers. But when the apostles were far engaged in the deep, a great tempest arose, with which they were pressed to the extremity of danger, and the last refuges, labouring in sadness and hopelessness, till "the fourth watch of the night," when, in the midst of their fears and labour, "Jesus comes, walking on the sea," and appeared to them, which turned their fears into affrightments; for "they supposed it had been a spirit:" but he appeased their fears with his presence, and manifestation who he was; which yet they desired to have proved to them by a sign. For "Simon Peter said unto him, Master, if it be thou, command me to come to thee on the waters." The Lord did so: and Peter, throwing himself upon the confidence of his Master's power and providence, came out of the ship, and his fear began to weigh him down, and "he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Jesus took him by the hand," reproved the timorousness of his faith, and "went with him into the ship:" where, when they had "worshipped him," and admired the divinity of his power and person, they presently "came into the land of Gennesareth," the ship arriving "at the port immediately;" and "all that were sick," or possessed with unclean spirits, "were brought to him, and as many as touched the border of his garment were made whole."

3. By this time, they whom Jesus had left on the other side of the lake, had come as far as Capernaum to seek him, wondering that he was there before them; but, upon the occasion of their so diligent inquisition, Jesus observes to them, "That it was not the divinity of the miracle that provoked their zeal, but the satisfaction they had in the loaves, a carnal complacency in their meal; and, upon that intimation, speaks of celestial bread, the divine nutriment of souls; and then discourses of the mysterious and symbolical manducation of Christ himself, affirming that he himself was 'the bread of life, that came down from heaven,' that he would give his disciples 'his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink,' and all this should be 'for the life of the world,' to nourish unto life eternal; so that, without it, a happy eternity could not be obtained." Upon this discourse, "divers of his disciples," (amongst whom St. Mark, the evangelist, is said to be one, though he was afterwards recalled by Simon Peter,) "forsook him,"[a] being scandalized by their literal and carnal understanding of those words of Jesus, which he intended in a spiritual sense. For "the words that he spake" were not profitable in the sense of flesh and blood, but "they are spirit, and they are life," himself being the expounder, who best knew his own meaning.

4. When Jesus saw this great defection of his disciples from him, he turned him to the twelve apostles, and asked, if they "also would go away? Simon Peter answered, Lord, whither shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe, and are sure, thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Although this public confession was made by Peter, in the name and confidence of the other apostles, yet Jesus told them, that even amongst the twelve there was "one devil;" meaning Judas Iscariot, "who afterwards betrayed him." This he told them prophetically, that they might perceive the sad accidents, which afterwards happened, did not invade and surprise him, in the disadvantages of ignorance or improvision, but came by his own knowledge and providence.

[a] Epiphan. Hæres. 15.

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5. Then came to him the Pharisees, and some scribes, which came from Jerusalem and Galilee, (for "Jesus would not go to Judea, because the Jews laid wait to kill him,") and quarrelled with him about certain impertinent, unnecessary rites, derived to them, not by Divine sanction, but "ordinances of man:" such as were "washing their hands oft when they eat, baptizing cups and platters, and washing tables and beds;" which ceremonies the apostles of Jesus did not observe, but attended diligently to the simplicity and spiritual holiness of their Master's doctrine. But, in return to their vain demands, Jesus gave them a sharp reproof, for prosecuting these and many other traditions to the discountenance of Divine precepts: and, in particular, they taught men to give to the corban, and refused to supply the necessity of their parents, thinking it to be religion, though they neglected piety and charity. And again, he thunders out woes and sadnesses against their impieties, for being curious of minutes, and punctual in rites and ceremonials, but most negligent and incurious of judgment and the love of God; for their pride, for their hypocrisy, for their imposing burdens upon others, which themselves helped not to support; for taking away the key of knowledge from the people, obstructing the passages to heaven; for approving the acts of their fathers in persecuting the prophets. But, for the question itself concerning washings, Jesus taught the people, that no outward impurity did stain the soul, in the sight of God, but all pollution is from within, from the corruption of the heart, and impure thoughts, unchaste desires, and unholy purposes, and that charity is the best purifier in the world.

6. And thence "Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house," that he might "not be known." The diligence of a mother's love, and sorrow and necessity, found him out in his retirement; for a "Syrophœnician woman came, and besought him, that he would cast the devil out of her daughter." But Jesus discoursed to her by way of discomfort and rejection of her, for her nation's sake. But the seeming denial did but enkindle her desires, and made her importunity more bold and undeniable; she begged but "some crumbs that fell from the children's table," but one instance of favour to her daughter, which he poured forth, without measure, upon the sons and daughters of Israel. Jesus was pleased with her zeal and discretion, and pitied her daughter's infelicity, and dismissed her with saying, "The devil was gone out of her daughter."

7. But Jesus staid not long here, but returning "to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of Decapolis, they brought unto him a man deaf and dumb," whom Jesus cured by "touching his tongue, and putting his fingers in his ears:" which caused the people to give a large testimony in approbation of all his actions. And they followed him unto a mountain, bringing to him multitudes of diseased people, and he healed them all. But because the people had followed him "three days, and had nothing to eat," Jesus, in pity to their need, resolved to feast them once more at the charge of a miracle: therefore, taking "seven loaves and a few small fishes, he blessed them, and satisfied four thousand men, besides women and children." And there remained "seven baskets full of broken bread and fish." From whence Jesus departed, by ship, to the coasts of Mageddon and Dalmanutha, whither "the Pharisees and Sadducees came, seeking of him a sign." But Jesus rejected their impertinent and captious demand, knowing they did it to ill purposes, and with disaffection; reproving them, that they "discerned the face of the sky," and the prognostics of "fair or foul weather," but "not the signs of the times" of the Son of man. However, since they had neglected so great demonstrations of miracles, gracious discourses, holy laws and prophecies, they must expect "no other sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;" meaning, the resurrection of his body after three days' burial: and so he dismissed the impertinent inquisitors.

8. And passing again over the lake, as his disciples were solicitous, because "they had forgot to take bread," he gave them caution to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the leaven of Herod;" meaning, the hypocrisy and vanities of the one, and the heresy of the other. For Herod's leaven was the pretence that he was the Messias, which the sect of the Herodians did earnestly and spitefully promote. And, after this entertainment of themselves by the way, they came together to Bethsaida, where Jesus cured a blind man, with a collyrium of spittle, salutary as balsam, or the purest eye-bright, when his Divine benediction once had hallowed it. But Jesus staid not there, but, departing thence into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi out of Herod's power, (for it was in Philip's jurisdiction,) after he had "prayed with his disciples," he inquired what opinion the world had of him, and "whom they reported him to be? They answered, Some say thou art John the Baptist, some that thou art Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets:" for, in Galilee especially, the sect of the Pharisees was mightily disseminated, whose opinion it was, that the souls of dead men, according to their several merits, did transmigrate into other bodies of very perfect and excellent persons. And, therefore, in all this variety, none hit upon the right, or fancied him to be a distinct person from the ancients; but, although they differed in the assignation of his name, yet, generally, they agreed it was the soul of a departed prophet, which had passed into another body. But Jesus asked the apostles their opinion; and Peter, in the name of all the rest, made an open and confident confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

9. This confession Jesus not only confirmed as true, but as "revealed by God," and of fundamental necessity: for, after the blessing of Peter's person, upon allusion of Peter's name, Jesus said, that "upon this rock [the article of Peter's confession] he would build his church," promising to it assistances, even to perpetuity, insomuch that "the gates of hell," that is, persecution, and death, and the grave, "should never prevail against it:" adding, withal, a promise to Peter, in behalf of all the rest,

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as he made a confession for them all, that he would "give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that whatsoever he should bind on earth, should be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he should loose on earth, should be loosed in heaven:" a power which he never communicated before or since, but to their successors; greater than the large charter of nature, and the donative of creation, in which all the creatures under heaven were made subject to man's empire, but, till now, heaven itself was never subordinate to human ministration.

10. And now the days, from henceforward to the death of Jesus, we must reckon to be like the vigils, or eves, of his passion; for now he began, and often did ingeminate, those sad predictions of his unhandsome usage he should shortly find; that he should be "rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and suffer many things at Jerusalem, and be killed, and be raised up the third day." But Peter, hearing that sad discourse, so contrary to his hopes, which he had blended with temporal expectances, (for he had learned the doctrine of Christ's advent, but not the mystery of the cross,) in great and mistaken civility, took Jesus aside, "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus, full of zeal against so soft and human admonition, that savoured nothing of God, or of abstracted, immaterial considerations, chid Peter bitterly: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." And, calling his disciples to him, he told them a second part of a sad doctrine, that not only himself, but all they also, must suffer. For when the head was to be crowned with thorns, if the members were wrapt in softnesses, it was an unhandsome indecency, and a disunion too near an antipathy; and, therefore, whoever will be the disciple of Jesus, must "take up his cross, deny himself," and his own fonder appetites, and trace his Master's footsteps, marked out with blood, that he shed for our redemption and restitution. And, that there be no escape from the participation of Christ's suffering, Jesus added this dilemma: "He that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose it, shall save it" to eternity. Which part soever we choose, there is a life to be lost: but as the first are foolish to the extremest misery, that will lose their souls to gain the world; so they are most wise and fortunate, that will give their lives for him; because, when "the Son of man shall come, in his own glory, and his Father's, and of his angels, he shall reward every man according to his works." This discourse Jesus concluded with a prophecy, that "some, standing" in that presence, "should not die, till they saw the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

11. Of the greater glories of which, in due time to be revealed, "Jesus, after eight days," gave a bright and excellent probation. For, "taking with him Peter, and James, and John, he went up into the mountain Tabor, to pray; and while he prayed, he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine like the sun, and his garments were white and glistering. And there appeared talking with him Moses and Elias gloriously, speaking of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, which glory these apostles, after they had awaked from sleep, did behold." And the interlocutors with Jesus, having finished their embassy of death, (which they delivered in forms of glory, representing the excellencies of the reward, together with the sharpness of the passage and interval,) departed, leaving the apostles "full of fear," and wonder, and ecstasy, insomuch that "Peter talked he knew not what;" but nothing amiss, something prophetical, saying, "Master, it is good to be here; let us build three tabernacles." And some devout persons, in memory of the mystery, did erect three churches in the same place, in after ages.[b] But, after the departure of those attendant saints, "a cloud encircled Jesus" and the disciples, "and a voice came from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, hear him." The cloud quickly disappeared, and freed the disciples from the fear it had put them in. So they attended Jesus, and "descended from the mountain," being "commanded silence," which they observed, "till the resurrection."

12. The next day came to Jesus a man praying in behalf of his son, "lunatic and sore troubled with a devil," who sought oft "to destroy him in fire and water,"[c] that Jesus would be pleased to deliver him. For his apostles tried, and "could not," by reason of the want of faith; for this grace, if it be true, though in a less degree, is of power to "remove mountains," to pluck up trees by the roots, and to give them solid foundation in the waters. "And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him" from that very hour. Thence Jesus departed privately into Galilee, and in his journey repeated those sadnesses of his approaching passion; which so afflicted the spirits of the disciples, that they durst no more provoke him to discourse, lest he should take occasion to interweave something of that unpleasant argument with it. For sad and disconsolate persons use to create comforts to themselves by fiction of fancy, and use arts of avocation to remove displeasure from them, and stratagems to remove it from their presence, by removing it from their apprehensions, thinking the incommodity of it is then taken away, when they have lost the sense.

13. When Jesus was now come to Capernaum, the exactors of rates came to Simon Peter, asking him if his Master paid the accustomed imposition, viz. a sicle, or didrachm, the fourth part of an ounce of silver, which was the tribute[d] which the Lord imposed upon all the sons of Israel, from twenty years old and above, to pay for redemption and propitiation, and for the use of the tabernacle. "When Peter came into the house, Jesus," knowing the message that he was big with, "prevented him," by asking him, "Of whom do the kings of the nations take tribute? of their own children or of strangers? Peter answered, Of strangers." Then

[b] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 17.

[c] Sæpe fui sorbendus aquis, sæpe igne vorandus:
Sed timuere tuas ignis et unda manus.

[d] Exod. xxx.

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"said Jesus, Then are the children free;" meaning, that since the gentile kings do not exact tribute of their sons, neither will God of his. And, therefore, this pension, to be paid for the use of the tabernacle, for the service of God, for the redemption of their souls, was not to be paid by him, who was the Son of God, but by strangers. "Yet to avoid offence," he sent Peter a-fishing, and provided a fish with two didrachms of silver in it, which he commanded Peter to pay for them two.

14. But when the disciples were together with "Jesus in the house, he asked them what they discoursed of upon the way;" for they had fallen upon an ambitious and mistaken quarrel, "which of them should be greatest in their Master's kingdom," which they still did dream should be an external and secular royalty, full of fancy and honour. But the Master was diligent to check their forwardness, establishing a rule for clerical deportment: "He that will be greatest among you, let him be your minister:" so supposing a greater and a lesser, a minister, and a person to be ministered unto, but dividing the grandeur of the person from the greatness of office (that the higher the employment is, the more humble should be the man); because, in spiritual prelation, it is not as in secular pomps, where the dominion is despotic, the coercion bloody, the dictates imperious, the laws externally compulsory, and the titles arrogant and vain; and all the advantages are so passed upon the person, that, making that first to be splendid, it passes from the person to the subjects, who, in abstracted essences, do not easily apprehend regalities in veneration, but as they are subjected in persons made excellent by such superstructures of majesty: but, in dignities ecclesiastical, the dominion is paternal, the regiment persuasive and argumentative, the coercion by censures immaterial, by cession and consent, by denial of benefits, by the interest of virtues, and the efficacy of hopes, and impresses upon the spirit; the laws are full of admonition and sermon; the titles of honour monitors of duty, and memorials of labour and offices; and all the advantages which from the office usually pass upon the person, are to be divested by the humility of the man; and, when they are of greatest veneration, they are abstracted excellencies and immaterial, not passing through the person to the people, and reflected to his lustre, but transmitted by his labour and ministry, and give him honour for his labour's sake, (which is his personal excellency,) not for his honour and title, which is either a derivative from Christ, or from the constitution of pious persons, estimating and valuing the relatives of religion.

15. Then "Jesus taketh a little child, and setteth him in the midst," propounding him, by way of emblem, a pattern of humility and simplicity, without the mixtures of ambition or caitive distempers; such infant candour, and lowliness of spirit, being the necessary port through which we must pass, if we will enter into the courts of heaven. But as a current of wholesome waters, breaking from its restraint, runs out in a succession of waters, and every preceding draught draws out the next; so were the discourses of Jesus excellent and opportune, creating occasions for others that the whole doctrine of the gospel, and the entire will of the Father, might be communicated upon design; even the chances of words and actions being made regular and orderly by Divine providence. For, from the instance of humility, in the symbol and hieroglyphic of the child, Jesus discourses of "the care God takes of little children, whether naturally or spiritually such; the danger of doing them scandal and offences; the care and power of their angels guardian; of the necessity in the event that scandals should arise, and of the great woe and infelicity of those persons, who were the active ministers of such offences."

16. But if, in the traverses of our life, discontents and injuries be done, Jesus teaches how the injured person should demean himself:[e] First, reprove the offending party privately; if he repent, forgive him for ever, with a mercy as unwearied and as multiplied as his repentance. For the servant, to whom his lord had forgiven ten thousand talents, because he refused to forgive his fellow-servant one hundred pence, was delivered to the tormentors,[f] till he should pay that debt which his lord once forgave, till the servant's impiety forced him to repent his donative and remission. But if he refuses the charity of private correction, let him be reproved before a few witnesses; and in case he be still incorrigible, let him be brought to the tribunal of the church; against whose advices if he shall kick, let him feel her power, and be cut off from the communion of saints, becoming a pagan or a publican. And to make that the church shall not have a dead and ineffectual hand in her animadversions, Jesus promises to all the apostles, what before he promised to Peter, a power of "binding and loosing on earth," and that it should be "ratified in heaven," what they shall so dispose on earth with an unerring key.

17. But John interrupted him, telling him of a stranger that "cast out devils in the name of Jesus," but because he was not of the family, he had "forbidden him." To this Jesus replied, that he should "in no wise have forbidden him," for, in all reason, he would do veneration to that person, whose name he saw to be energetical and triumphant over devils, and in whose name it is almost necessary that man should believe, who used it as an instrument of ejection of impure spirits. Then Jesus proceeded in his excellent sermon and union of discourses, adding holy precepts "concerning offences, which a

[e] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam. —TACIT.

[f] De pœnis debitorum qui solvendo non sunt, vide Livium, Decad. i. lib. i. et vi.; et Dionys. Halicarn. Hist. Rom. lib. vi.; et A. Gellium, lib. xx. c. 1. qui ait, licuisse secare, si vellent, atque partiri corpus debitoris. Eo tamen consilio (sic barbariem excusat Gellius) tanta immanitas pœnæ denunciata est, ne ad eam unquam pervenirent: dissectum esse antiquitus neminem neque legi, neque audivi. Duravit tamen ad ævum Constantini Magni, ut plumbatis cæderentur debitores; qui tandem Christianam mansuetudinem in leges introduxit, et plumbatorum immanitatem sustulit.—Cod. Theod. lib. iv. et vii. de Exact.

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man might do to himself; in which case he is to be severe, though most gentle to others. For, in his own case, he must show no mercy, but abscission: for it is better to 'cut off the offending hand or foot,' or 'extinguish the offending eye,' rather than, upon the support of a troublesome foot, and by the light of an offending eye, walk into ruin and a sad eternity, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'" And so Jesus ended this chain of excellent discourses.

18. About this time was the Jews' feast of Tabernacles, whither Jesus went up, as it were, in secret; and, passing through Samaria, he found the inhabitants of a little village so inhospitable, as to refuse to give him entertainment; which so provoked the intemperate zeal of James and John, that they would fain have "called for fire to consume them, even as Elias did." But Jesus rebuked the furies of their anger, teaching them to distinguish the spirit of christianity from the ungentleness of the decretory zeal of Elias. For, since "the Son of man came" with a purpose "to seek and to save what was lost," it was but an indiscreet temerity, suddenly, upon the lightest umbrages of displeasure, to destroy a man, whose redemption cost the effusion of the dearest blood from the heart of Jesus. But, contrariwise, Jesus does a miracle upon the ten leprous persons, which came to him from the neighbourhood, crying out, with sad exclamations, for help. But Jesus sent them to the priest, to offer for their cleansing. Thither they went, and but one only returned to give thanks, and he a stranger, who, "with a loud voice, glorified God," and with humble adoration worshipped and gave thanks to Jesus.

19. When Jesus had finished his journey, and was now come to Jerusalem, for the first days he was undiscerned in public conventions, but heard of the various opinions of men concerning him: "some saying he was a good man, others, that he deceived the people;" and the Pharisees sought for him, to do him a mischief. But when they despaired of finding him in the midst of the feast and the people, he made sermons openly, in the midst of the temple; whom when he had convinced, by the variety and divinity of his miracles and discourses, they gave the greatest testimony in the world of human weakness, and how prevalent a prejudice is above the confidence and conviction of a demonstration. For a proverb, a mistake, an error in matter of circumstance, did, in their understandings, outweigh multitudes of miracles and arguments; and because "Christ was of Galilee," because "they knew whence he was," because of the proverb, that "out of Galilee comes no prophet," because "the rulers did not believe in him," these outweighed the demonstrations of his mercy, and his power, and divinity. But yet "very many believed on him; and no man durst lay hands to take him; for as yet his time was not come," in which he meant to give himself up to the power of the Jews: and therefore, when the Pharisees sent officers to seize him, they also became his disciples, being themselves surprised by the excellency of his doctrine.

20. After this "Jesus went to the mount of Olivet," on the east of Jerusalem, and "the next day returned again into the temple," where "the scribes and Pharisees brought him a woman taken in the act of adultery," tempting him to give sentence, that they might accuse him of severity or intermeddling, if he condemned her; or of remissness and popularity, if he did acquit her. But Jesus found out an expedient for their difficulty, and changed the scene, by bidding "the innocent person among them cast the first stone at the adulteress;" and then "stooping down," to give them fair occasion to withdraw, "he wrote upon the ground with his finger," whilst they left the woman and her crime to a more private censure: "Jesus was left alone, and the woman in the midst," whom Jesus dismissed, charging her to "sin no more." And, a while after, Jesus begins again to discourse to them, "of his mission from the Father, of his crucifixion and exaltation from the earth, of the reward of believers, of the excellency of truth, of spiritual liberty and relations; who are the sons of Abraham, and who the children of the devil; of his own eternal generation, of the desire of Abraham to see his day." In which sermon he continued, adding still new excellencies, and confuting their malicious and vainer calumnies, till they, that they might also confute him, "took up stones to cast at him;" but he "went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

21. But, in his passage, he met a man who had been born blind: and after he had discoursed cursorily of the cause of that blindness, it being a misery not sent as a punishment to "his own or his parents' sin," but as an occasion to make public "the glory of God;" he, to manifest that himself was "the light of the world" in all senses, said it now, and proved it by a miracle: for, sitting down, "he made clay of spittle," and, "anointing the eyes of the blind man," bid him "go wash in Siloam;" which was a pool of limpid water, which God sent at the prayer of Isaiah the prophet, a little before his death,[s] to satisfy the necessities of his people, oppressed with thirst and a strict siege; and it stood at the foot of the mount Sion, and gave its water at first by returns and periods, always to the Jews, but not to the enemies. And those intermitted springings were still continued, but only a pool was made from the frequent effluxes. The blind man "went, and washed, and returned seeing;" and was incessantly vexed by the Pharisees, to tell them the manner and circumstances of the cure: and when the man had averred the truth, and named his physician, giving him a pious and charitable testimony, the Pharisees, because they could not force him to disavow his good opinion of Jesus, "cast him out of the synagogue." But Jesus, meeting him, received him into the church, told him he was Christ; and the man became again enlightened, and he "believed, and worshipped." But the Pharisees blasphemed: for such was the dispensation of the Divine mysteries, that the blind should see, and they which think they see clearly should become blind, because they had not the excuse of ignorance to

[s] Epiphan. de Vita et Interitu Prophet. c. 7.

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lessen or take off the sin; but, in the midst of light, they shut their eyes, and doted upon darkness, and "therefore did their sin remain."

22. But Jesus continued his sermon among the Pharisees, insinuating reprehensions in his dogmatical discourses, which, like light, shined, and discovered error. For, by discoursing "the properties of a 'good shepherd' and the lawful way of 'intromission,' he proved them to be 'thieves and robbers,' because they refused to 'enter in by Jesus,' who is 'the door of the sheep;' and, upon the same ground, reproved all those false Christs, which before him usurped the title of Messias; and proved his own vocation and office by an argument, which no other shepherd would use, because he 'laid down his life for his sheep:' others would take the fleece and eat the flesh, but none but himself would die for his sheep; but he would first die, and then gather his 'sheep' together 'into one fold,' (intimating the calling of the gentiles;) to which purpose he was 'enabled by his Father to lay down his life, and to take it up;' and had also endeared them to his Father, that they should be 'preserved unto eternal life, and no power should be able to take them out of his hand, or the hand of his Father:' for because Jesus was 'united to the Father,' the Father's care preserved the Son's flocks."

23. But the Jews, to requite him for his so divine sermons, betook themselves to their old argument: "they took up stones again to cast at him," pretending he had blasphemed: but Jesus proved it to be no blasphemy to call himself "the Son of God," because "they to whom the word of God came, are," in Scripture, "called Gods." But nothing could satisfy them, whose temporal interest was concerned not to consent to such doctrine, which would save their souls by ruining their temporal concernments. But when "they sought again to take him, Jesus escaped out of their hands, and went away beyond Jordan, where John at first baptized:" which gave the people occasion to remember that "John did no miracle," but this man does many; and John, whom all men did revere and highly account of, for his office and sanctity, gave testimony to Jesus. "And many believed on him there."

24. After this, Jesus knowing that "the harvest was great," and as yet the labourers had been few, sent out seventy-two of his disciples, with the like commission as formerly the twelve apostles, that they might "go before to those places, whither himself meant to come." Of which number were the seven, whom afterwards the apostles set over the widows, and Matthias, Mark, and some[h] say Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelles, Rufus, Niger, Cephas, (not Peter,) Thaddæus, Aristion, and John. The rest of the names could not be recovered by the best diligence of Eusebius and Epiphanius. But when they returned from their journey, they rejoiced greatly in the legation and power, and Jesus also "rejoiced in spirit," giving glory to God, that he had "made his revelations to babes" and the more imperfect persons; like the lowest valleys, which receive from heaven the greatest floods of rain and blessings, and stand thick with corn and flowers, when the mountains are unfruitful in their height and greatness.

25. And now a doctor of the law came to Jesus, asking him a question of the greatest consideration that a wise man could ask, or a prophet answer: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus referred him to the Scriptures, and declared the way to heaven to be this only, "to love the Lord with all our powers and faculties, and our neighbour as ourself." But when the lawyer, being captious, made a scruple in a smooth rush, asking what is meant by "neighbour;" Jesus told him, by a parable of a traveller fallen into the hands of robbers, and neglected by a priest and by a Levite, but relieved by a Samaritan, that no distance of country or religion destroys the relation of neighbourhood; but every person, with whom we converse in peace and charity, is that neighbour whom we are to love as ourselves.

26. Jesus, having departed from Jerusalem upon the fore-mentioned danger, came to a village called Bethany, where Martha, making great and busy preparation for his entertainment, to express her joy and her affections to his person, desired Jesus to dismiss her sister Mary from his feet, who sat there feasting herself with the viands and sweetnesses of his doctrine, incurious of the provisions for entertainment. But Jesus commended her choice; and though he did not expressly disrepute Martha's civility, yet he preferred Mary's religion and sanctity of affections. In this time (because "the night drew on, in which no man could work") Jesus hastened to do his Father's business, and to pour out whole cataracts of holy lessons, like the fruitful Nilus swelling over the banks, and filling all the trenches, to make a plenty of corn and fruits great as the inundation. Jesus therefore teaches his disciples "that form of prayer, the second time, which we call 'the Lord's Prayer:' teaches them assiduity and indefatigable importunity in prayer, by a parable of an importunate neighbour borrowing loaves at midnight, and a troublesome widow, who forced an unjust judge to do her right by her clamorous and hourly addresses: encourages them to pray, by consideration of the Divine goodness and fatherly affection, far more indulgent to his sons than natural fathers are to their dearest issue; and adds a gracious promise of success to them that pray. He reproves Pharisaical ostentation; arms his disciples against the fear of men and the terrors of persecution, which can arrive but to the incommodities of the body; teaches the fear of God, who is Lord of the whole man, and can accurse the soul, as well as punish the body. He refuses to divide the inheritance between two brethren, as not having competent power to become lord in temporal jurisdictions. He preaches against covetousness, and the placing felicities in worldly possessions, by a parable of a rich man, whose riches were too big for his barns, and big enough for his soul, and he ran over into voluptuousness, and stupid complacen-

[h] Epiphan. Pan. lib. i. tom. 1. Euseb. lib. i. c. 12. Papias, apud Euseb. lib. iii. c. 33.

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cies in his perishing goods: he was snatched from their possession, and his soul taken from him, in the violence of a rapid and hasty sickness, in the space of one night. He discourses of Divine providence and care over us all, and descending even as low as grass. He exhorts to alms-deeds, to watchfulness, and preparation against the sudden and unexpected coming of our Lord to judgment, or the arrest of death: tells the offices and sedulity of the clergy, under the apologue of stewards and governors of their Lord's houses; teaches them gentleness and sobriety, and not to do evil upon confidence of their Lord's absence and delay; and teaches the people, even of themselves, to judge what is right concerning the signs of the coming of the Son of man. And the end of all these discourses was, that all men should repent, and live good lives, and be saved."

27. At this sermon "there were present some, that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices." For the Galileans were a sort of people, that taught it to be unlawful to pay tribute to strangers, or to pray for the Romans; and because the Jews did both, they refused to communicate in their sacred rites, and would sacrifice apart: at which solemnity, when Pilate, the Roman deputy, had apprehended many of them, he caused them all to be slain, making them to die upon the same altars. These were of the province of Judea, but of the same opinion with those who taught in Galilee, from whence the sect had its appellative. But to the story: Jesus made reply, that these external accidents, though they be sad and calamitous, yet they are no arguments of condemnation against the persons of the men, to convince them of greater guilt than others, upon whom no such visible signatures have been imprinted. The purpose of such chances is, that we should "repent, lest we perish" in the like judgment.

28. About this time a certain ruler of a synagogue renewed the old question about the observation of the sabbath, repining at Jesus, that he cured "a woman that was crooked, loosing her from her infirmity, with which she had been afflicted eighteen years." But Jesus made the man ashamed, by an argument from their own practice, who themselves "loose an ox from the stall on the sabbath, and lead him to watering:" and by the same argument he also stopped the mouths of the scribes and Pharisees, which were open upon him, for curing an hydropic person upon the sabbath. For Jesus, that he might draw off and separate christianity from the yoke of ceremonies, by abolishing and taking off the strictest Mosaical rites, chose to do very many of his miracles upon the sabbath, that he might do the work of abrogation and institution both at once; not much unlike the sabbatical pool in Judea, which was dry six days, but gushed out in a full stream upon the sabbath.[1] For though, upon all days, Christ was operative and miraculous, yet many reasons did concur and determine him to a more frequent working upon those days of public ceremony and convention. But, going forth from thence, he went up and down the cities of Galilee, re-enforcing the same doctrine he had formerly taught them, and daily adding new precepts, and cautions, and prudent insinuations: "advertising of the multitudes of them that perish, and the paucity of them that shall be saved, and that we should 'strive to enter in at the strait gate;' that 'the way to destruction is broad' and plausible, 'the way to heaven' nice and austere, 'and few there be that find it;' teaches them modesty at feasts, and entertainments of the poor: discourses of the many excuses and unwillingnesses of persons who were invited to the feast of the kingdom, the refreshments of the gospel; and tacitly insinuates the rejection of the Jews, who were the first 'invited,' and the calling of the gentiles, who were the persons 'called in from the highways and hedges.' He reprehends Herod for his subtilty and design to kill him; prophesies that he should die at Jerusalem; and intimates great sadnesses future to them, for 'neglecting this, their day' of visitation, and for 'killing the prophets and the messengers sent from God.'"

29. It now grew towards winter, and the Jews' feast of Dedication was at hand; therefore, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the feast, where he preached in Solomon's porch, which part of the temple stood entire from the first ruins: and the end of his sermon was, that the Jews had like to have stoned him. But, retiring from thence, he went beyond Jordan, where he taught the people, in a most elegant and persuasive parable, concerning "the mercy of God in accepting penitents, in the parable of the 'prodigal son' returning; discourses of the design of the Messias coming into the world, to recover erring persons from their sin and danger, in the apologues of the 'lost sheep,' and 'groat;' and, under the representment of an unjust but prudent steward, he taught us so to employ our present opportunities and estates, by laying them out in acts of mercy and religion, that, when our souls shall be dismissed from the stewardship and custody of our body, we 'may be entertained in everlasting habitations.' He instructeth the Pharisees in the question of divorces, limiting the permissions of separations to the only cause of fornication: preferreth holy celibate before the estate of marriage, in them to whom the gift of continency is given, in order to the kingdom of heaven. He telleth a story or a parable, (for which is uncertain,) of a rich man (whom Euthymius, out of the tradition of the Hebrews, nameth Nymensis) and Lazarus; the first a voluptuous person, and uncharitable; the other, pious, afflicted, sick, and a beggar; the first died, and went to hell; the second, to Abraham's bosom; God so ordering the dispensation of good things, that we cannot easily enjoy two heavens; nor shall the infelicities of our lives, if we be pious, end otherwise than in a beatified condition. The epilogue of which story discovered this truth also, that the ordinary means of salvation are the express revelations of Scripture, and the ministries of God's appointment; and whosoever neglects these, shall not be supplied with means extraordinary, or, if he were, they would be totally ineffectual."

[1] Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 24.

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30. And still the people drew water from the fountains of our Saviour, which streamed out in a full and continual emanation. For, adding wave to wave, "line to line, precept upon precept," he "reproved the fastidiousness of the Pharisee, that came with eucharist to God, and contempt to his brother; and commended the humility of the publican's address, who came deploring his sins, and, with modesty, and penance, and importunity, begged, and obtained a mercy. Then he laid hands upon certain young children, and gave them benediction, charging his apostles to admit infants to him, because to them, in person, and to such, in emblem and signification, the kingdom of heaven does appertain. He instructs a young man in the ways and counsels of perfection, besides the observation of precepts, by heroical renunciations, and acts of munificent charity." Which discourse, because it alighted upon an indisposed and an unfortunate subject, ("for the young man was very rich,") Jesus discourses "how hard it is for a rich man to be saved; but he expounds himself to mean, 'they that trust in riches;' and, however it is a matter of so great temptation, that it is almost impossible to escape, yet 'with God nothing is impossible.'" But, when the apostles heard the Master bidding the young man "sell all, and give to the poor, and follow him," and for his reward promised him "a heavenly treasure;" Peter, in the name of the rest, began to think that this was their case, and the promise also might concern them; and asking him this question, What shall we have, who have forsaken all, and followed thee? Jesus answered, that they should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

31. And Jesus extended this mercy to every disciple, that should "forsake either house, or wife, or children, or any thing, for his sake and the gospel's," and that they "should receive a hundredfold in this life," by way of comfort and equivalence, "and, in the world to come," thousands of glories and possessions, in fruition and redundancy. For "they that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last;" and the despised people of this world shall reign like kings, and contempt itself shall swell up into glory, and poverty into an eternal satisfaction. And these rewards shall not be accounted according to the privileges of nations, or priority of vocation, but readiness of mind and obedience, and sedulity of operation after calling: which Jesus taught his disciples in the parable of the labourers "in the vineyard," to whom the master gave the same reward, though the times of their working were different; as their calling and employment had determined the opportunity of their labours.

DISCOURSE XVII.

Of Scandal, or giving and taking Offence.[a]

1. A SAD curse being threatened, in the gospel, to them who "offend any of Christ's little ones," that is, such as are novices and babes in christianity, it concerns us to learn our duty, and perform it, that we may avoid the curse: for, "Woe to all them by whom offences come."[b] And although the duty is so plainly explicated, and represented in gloss and case, by the several commentaries of St. Paul, upon this menace of our blessed Saviour;[c] yet, because our English word "offence," which is commonly used in this question of scandal, is so large and equivocal, that it hath made many pretences, and intricated this article to some inconvenience, it is not without good purpose to draw into one body those propositions, which the masters of spiritual life have described in the managing of this question.

2. First: By whatsoever we do our duty to God, we cannot directly do offence, or give scandal, to our brother; because, in such cases where God hath obliged us, he hath also obliged himself to reconcile our duty to the designs of God, to the utility of souls, and the ends of charity. And this proposition is to be extended to our obedience to the lawful constitutions of our competent superiors, in which cases we are to look upon the commandment, and leave the accidental events to the disposition of that Providence, who reconciles dissonances in nature, and concentres all the variety of accidents into his own glory. And whosoever is offended at me for obeying God, or God's vicegerent, is offended at me for doing my duty; and in this there is no more dispute, but whether I shall displease God, or my peevish neighbour. These are such, whom the Spirit of God complains of, under other representments: they "think it strange we run not into the same excess of riot;" their "eye is evil, because" their Master's "eye is good:" and the abounding of God's grace also may become to them an occasion of falling, and the long-suffering of God the encouragement to sin. In this there is no difficulty; for in what case soever we are bound to obey God, or man, in that case, and in that conjunction of circumstances, we have nothing permitted to our choice, and have no authority to remit of the right of God, or our superior. And, to comply with our neighbour in such questions, besides that it cannot serve any purposes of piety, if it declines from duty in any instance, it is like giving alms out of the portion of orphans, or building hospitals with the money and spoils of sacrilege. It is pusillanimity, or hypocrisy, or a denying to confess Christ before men, to comply with any man, and to offend God, or omit a duty. Whatsoever is necessary to be done, and is made so by God, no weakness or peevishness of man can make necessary not to be done. For the matter of scandal is a duty beneath the prime obligations of religion.

3. Secondly: But every thing which is used in religion, is not matter of precise duty; but there are some things, which indeed are pious and religious, but dispensable, voluntary, and commutable; such as are, voluntary fasts, exterior acts of discipline and mortification, not enjoined, great degrees of exterior worship, prostration, long prayers, vigils: and

[a] Ad Num. 3. [b] Matt. xviii. 7. [c] Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii. Gal. ii.

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in these things, although there is not directly a matter of scandal, yet there may be some prudential considerations in order to charity and edification. By pious actions, I mean either particular pursuances of a general duty, which are uncommanded in the instance, such as are the minutes and expresses of alms; or else they are commended, but in the whole kind of them unenjoined, such as divines call the "counsels of perfection." In both these cases, a man cannot be scandalous. For the man doing, in charity and the love of God, such actions which are aptly expressive of love, the man, I say, is not uncharitable in his purposes: and the actions themselves, being either attempts or proceedings toward perfection, or else actions of direct duty, are as innocent in their productions as in themselves, and, therefore, without the malice of the recipient, cannot induce him into sin: and nothing else is scandal. To do any pious act proceeds from the Spirit of God, and to give scandal, from the spirit of malice, or indiscretion; and, therefore, a pious action, whose fountain is love and wisdom, cannot end in uncharitableness or imprudence. But because, when any man is offended at what I esteem piety, there is a question whether the action be pious or not; therefore, it concerns him that works, to take care that his action be either an act of duty, though not determined to a certain particular; or else, be something counselled in Scripture, or practised by a holy person, there recorded, and no where reproved; or a practice warranted by such precedents, which modest, prudent, and religious persons account a sufficient inducement of such particulars: for he that proceeds upon such principles, derives the warrant of his actions from beginnings, which secure the particular and quits the scandal.

4. This, I say, is a security against the uncharitableness and the sin of scandal; because a zeal of doing pious actions is a zeal according to God: but it is not always a security against the indiscretion of the scandal. He that reproves a foolish person in such circumstances that provoke him, or make him impudent or blasphemous, does not give scandal, and brings no sin upon himself, though he occasioned it in the other: but, if it was probable such effects should be consequent to the reprehension, his zeal was imprudent and rash; but so long as it was zeal for God, and, in its own matter, lawful, it could not be an active or guilty scandal: but if it be no zeal, and be a design to entrap a man's unwariness, or passion, or shame, and to disgrace the man, by that means, or any other, to make him sin, then it is directly the offending of our brother. They that "preached Christ out of envy," intended to do offence to the apostles: but, because they were impregnable, the sin rested in their own bosom, and God wrought his own ends by it. And, in this sense, they are scandalous persons, who "fast for strife," who pray for rebellion, who entice simple persons into the snare, by colours of religion. Those very exterior acts of piety become an offence, because they are done to evil purposes; to abuse proselytes, and to draw away disciples after them, and make them love the sin, and march under so splendid and fair colours. They who, out of strictness and severity of persuasion, represent the conditions of the gospel alike to every person, that is, nicer than Christ described them, in all circumstances, and deny such liberties of exterior desires and complacency, which may be reasonably permitted to some men, do very indiscreetly, and may occasion the alienation of some men's minds from the entertainments of religion: but this being accidental to the thing itself, and to the purpose of the man, is not the sin of scandal, but it is the indiscretion of scandal, if, by such means, he divorces any man's mind from the cohabitation and unions of religion: and yet, if the purpose of the man be to affright weaker and unwise persons, it is a direct scandal, and one of those ways which the devil uses towards the peopling of his kingdom; it is a plain laying of a snare to entrap feeble and uninstructed souls.

5. But if the pious action have been formerly joined with any thing that is truly criminal, with idolatry, with superstition, with impious customs or impure rites, and by retaining the piety, I give cause to my weak brother to think I approve of the old appendage, and, by my reputation, invite him to swallow the whole action without discerning; the case is altered; I am to omit that pious action, if it be not under command, until I have acquitted it from the suspicion of evil company. But when I have done what, in prudence, I guess sufficient to thaw the frost of jealousy, and to separate those dissonances, which formerly seemed united, I have done my duty of charity, by endeavouring to free my brother from the snare, and I have done what, in christian prudence, I was obliged, when I have protested against the appendant crime: if, afterwards, the same person shall entertain the crime, upon pretence of my example, who have plainly disavowed it, he lays the snare for himself, and is glad of the pretence, or will, in spite, enter into the net, that he might think it reasonable to rail at me. I may not, with christian charity or prudence, wear the picture of our blessed Lord in rings or medals,[d] though with great affection and designs of doing him all the honour that I can, if, by such pictures, I invite persons, apt more to follow me than to understand me, to give divine honour to a picture; but when I have declared my hatred of superstitious worshippings, and given my brother warning of the snare, which his own mistake, or the devil's malice, was preparing for him, I may then, without danger, signify my piety and affections in any civil representments, which are not against God's law or the customs of the church, or the analogy of faith. And there needs no other reason to be given for this rule, than that there is no reason to be given against it. If the nature of the thing be innocent, and the purpose of the man be pious, and he hath used his moral industry to secure his brother against accidental mischances and abuses;

[d] Ἐν δακτύλῳ Θεοῦ εἰκόνα μὴ περιφέρειν, dictum proverbialiter, contra leves et inanes ceremonias civilis et popularis religionis.

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his duty, in this particular, can have no more parts and instances.

6. But it is too crude an assertion, to affirm indefinitely, that whatsoever hath been abused to evil or superstitious purposes, must presently be abjured, and never entertained, for fear of scandal; for it is certain, that the best things have been most abused. Have not some persons used certain verses of the Psalter, as an antidote against the toothach? and carried the blessed sacrament in pendants about their necks, as a charm to countermand witches? and St. John's Gospel, as a spell against wild beasts, and wilder untamed spirits? Confession of sins to the ministers of religion hath been made an instrument to serve base ends; and so, indeed, hath all religion been abused: and some persons have been so receptive of scandal, that they suspected all religion to be a mere stratagem, because they have observed very many men have used it so. For some natures are like sponges or sugar, whose utmost verge if you dip in wine, it drowns itself by the moisture it sucks up, and is drenched all over, receiving its alteration from within; its own nature did the mischief, and plucks on its own dissolution. And these men are greedy to receive a scandal; and when it is presented but in small instances, they suck it up to the dissolution of their whole religion; being glad of a quarrel, that their impieties may not want all excuse. But yet, it is certainly very unreasonable to reject excellent things, because they have been abused; as if separable accidents had altered natures and essences, or that they resolve never to forgive the duties, for having once fallen into the hands of unskilful or malicious persons. Hezekiah took away the brazen serpent, because the people abused it to idolatry; but the serpent had long before lost its use: and yet, if the people had not been a peevish, and refractory, and superstitious people, in whose nature it was to take all occasions of superstition; and further yet, if the taking away such occasions and opportunities of that sin in special, had not been most agreeable with the designs of God, in forbidding to the people the common use of all images in the second commandment, which was given them after the erection of that brazen statue; Hezekiah possibly would not, or at least had not, been bound to have destroyed that monument of an old story and a great blessing, but have sought to separate the abuse from the minds of men, and retained the image. But in christianity, when none of these circumstances occur, where, by the greatness and plenty of revelations, we are more fully instructed in the ways of duty; and when the thing itself is pious, and the abuse very separable, it is infinite disparagement to us, or to our religion, either that our religion is not sufficient to cure an abuse, or that we will never part with it; but we must unpardonably reject a good, because it had once upon it a crust or spot of leprosy, though, since, it hath been washed in the waters of reformation. The primitive christians abstained from actions of themselves indifferent, which the unconverted people used, if those actions were symbolical, or adopted into false religions, or not well understood by those they were bound to satisfy: but when they had washed off the accrescences of gentile superstition, they chose such rites which their neighbours used, and had designs not imprudent or unhandsome; and they were glad of heathen temples, to celebrate the christian rites in them, and they made no other change, but that they ejected the devil, and invited their Lord into the possession.

7. Thirdly: In things merely indifferent, whose practice is not limited by command, nor their nature heightened by an appendant piety, we must use our liberty so as may not offend our brother, or lead him into a sin directly or indirectly. For scandal being directly against charity, it is to be avoided in the same measure, and by the same proportions, in which charity is to be pursued. Now we must so use ourselves, that we must cut off a foot, or pluck out an eye, rather than the one should bear us, and the other lead us, to sin and death; we must rather rescind all the natural and sensual, or dearest invitations to vice, and deny ourselves lawful things, than that lawful things should betray us to unlawful actions. And this rule is the measure of charity: our neighbour's soul ought to be dearer unto us than any temporal privilege. It is lawful for me to eat herbs, or fish, and to observe an ascetic diet; but if, by such austerities, I lead others to a good opinion of Montanism, or the practices of Pythagoras, or to believe flesh to be impure, I must rather alter my diet, than teach him to sin by mistaking me. St. Paul gave an instance of eating flesh, sold in the shambles, from the idol-temples: to eat it, in the relation of an idol-sacrifice, is a great sin; but when it is sold in the shambles, the property is altered to them that understand it so. But yet, even this Paul would not do, if, by so doing, he should encourage undiscerning people to eat all meat conveyed from the temple, and offered to devils. It is not in every man's head to distinguish formalities, and to make abstractions of purpose from exterior acts; and to alter their devotions, by new relations and respects, depending upon intellectual and metaphysical notions. And, therefore, it is not safe to do an action which is not lawful, but after the making distinctions, before ignorant and weaker persons, who swallow down the bole and the box that carries it, and never pare their apple, or take the core out. If I, by the law of charity, must rather quit my own goods, than suffer my brother to perish; much rather must I quit my privilege, and those superstructures of favour and grace, which Christ hath given me beyond my necessities, than wound the spirit and destroy the soul of a weak man, "for whom Christ died." It is an inordinate affection, to love my own ease, and circumstances of pleasure, before the soul of a brother; and such a thing are the privileges of christian liberty; for Christ hath taken off from us the restraints which God had laid upon the Jews, in meat and holydays: but these are but circumstances of grace, given us for opportunities, and cheap instances of charity. We should ill die for our brother, who will not lose a meal to prevent his sin, or change a dish to save his soul. And if the thing be indifferent to us, yet

it ought not to be indifferent to us whether our brother live or die.

8. Fourthly: And yet we must not, to please peevish or froward people, betray our liberty which Christ hath given us. If any man opposes the lawfulness and license of indifferent actions, or be disturbed at my using my privileges innocently; in the first case, I am bound to use them still; in the second, I am not bound to quit them to please him. For, in the first instance, he that shall cease to use his liberty to please him that says his liberty is unlawful, encourages him that says so in his false opinion, and, by complying with him, gives the scandal; and he who is angry with me for making use of it, is a person that, it may be, is "crept in, to spy out" and invade "my liberty," but not apt to be reduced into sin by that act of mine, which he detests, for which he despises me, and so makes my person unapt to be exemplar to him. To be angry with me for doing what Christ hath allowed me, and which is part of the liberty he purchased for me, when he took upon himself the form of a servant, is to judge me, and to be uncharitable to me: and he that does so, is beforehand with me, and upon the active part; he does the scandal to me, and, by offering to deprive me of my liberty, he makes my way to heaven narrower and more encumbered than Christ left it, and so places a stumbling-stone in my way; I put none in his. And if such peevishness and discontent of a brother engages me to a new and unimposed yoke, then it were in the power of my enemy, or any malevolent person, to make me never to keep festival, or never to observe any private fast; never to be prostrate at my prayers, nor to do any thing but according to his leave; and his humour shall become the rule of my actions; and then my charity to him shall be the greatest uncharitableness in the world to myself, and his liberty shall be my bondage. Add to this, that such complying and obeying the peevishness of discontented persons, is to no end of charity; for besides that such concessions never satisfy persons who are unreasonably angry, because by the same reason they may demand more, as they ask this, for which they had no reason at all; it also encourages them to be peevish, and gives fuel to the passion, and feeds the wolf; and so encourages the sin, and prevents none.

9. Fifthly: For he only gives scandal, who induces his brother directly or collaterally into sin, as appears by all the discourses in Scripture guiding us in this duty; and it is called "laying a stumbling-block in our brother's way, wounding the conscience of our weak brother."[e] Thus Balaam was said to lay a scandal before the sons of Israel, by tempting them to fornication with the daughters of Moab. Every evil example, or imprudent, sinful, and unwary deportment, is a scandal; because it invites others to do the like, leading them by the hand, taking off the strangeness and insolency of the act, which deters many men from entertaining it; and it gives some offers of security to others, that they shall escape as we have done; besides that it is in the nature of all agents, natural and moral, to assimilate, either by proper efficiency, or by counsel and moral invitements, others to themselves. But this is a direct scandal: and such it is, to give money to an idle person, who you know will be drunk with it; or to invite an intemperate person to an opportunity of excess, who desires it always, but without thee wants it. Indirectly and accidentally, but very criminally, they give scandal, who introduce persons into a state of life, from whence, probably, they pass into a state of sin. So did the Israelites, who married their daughters to the idolatrous Moabites; and so do they, who intrust a pupil to a vicious guardian. For, although God can preserve children in the midst of flames, without scorching; yet if they singe their hair, or scorch their flesh, they that put them in are guilty of the burning. And yet, further, if persons so exposed to danger should escape by miracle, yet they escape not who expose them to the danger. They who threw the children of the captivity into the furnace, were burnt to death though the children were not hurt: and the very offering a person in our trust to a certain or probable danger, foreseen and understood, is a likely way to pass sin upon the person so exposed, but a certain way to contract it in ourselves; it is directly against charity, for no man loves a soul unless he loves its safety; and he cares not to have his child safe, that throws him into the fire. Hither are to be reduced all false doctrines, aptly productive of evil life; the doctrines are scandalous, and the men guilty, if they understand the consequents of their own propositions: or if they think it probable, that persons will be led by such doctrines into evil persuasions, though themselves believe them not to be necessary products of their opinions; yet the very publishing such opinions, which, of themselves not being necessary, or otherwise very profitable, are apt to be understood, by weak persons at least, to ill ends, is against charity, and the duty we owe to our brother's soul.

10. Sixthly: It is not necessary for ever to abstain from things indifferent, to prevent the offending of a brother; but only till I have taken away that rock, against which some did stumble, or have done my endeavour to remove it. In questions of religion, it is lawful to use primitive and ancient words, at which men have been weakened and seem to stumble, when the objection is cleared, and the ill consequents and suspicion disavowed: and it may be of good use, charity, and edification, to speak the language of the purest ages, although that some words were used also in the impurest ages, and descended along, upon changing and declining articles; when it is rightly explicated, in what sense the best men did innocently use them, and the same sense is now protested. But in this case, it concerns prudence to see, that the benefit be greater than the danger. And the same, also, is to be said concerning all the actions and parts of christian liberty. For if, after I have removed the unevenness and objection of the accident; that is, if when I have explained my disrelish to the crime, which might possibly be gathered up and taken into prac-

[e] 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12. Rom. xiv. 21. Matt. v. 29. xiii. 57. Mark xiv. 27. vi. 3. iv. 17. Luke vii. 23. John xvi. 1

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tice by my misunderstood example, still any man will stumble and fall,—it is a resolution to fall, a love of danger, a peevishness of spirit, a voluntary misunderstanding; it is not a misery in the man, more than it is his own fault: and whenever the cause of any sin becomes criminal to the man that sins, it is certain, that if the other, who was made the occasion, did disavow and protest against the crime, the man that sins is the only guilty person, both in the effect and cause too; for the other could do no more but use a moral and prudent industry, to prevent a being misinterpreted; and if he were tied to more, he must quit his interest for ever in a perpetual scruple; and it is like taking away all laws to prevent disobedience, and making all even to secure the world against the effects of pride or stubbornness. I add to this, that since actions indifferent in their own natures, are not productive of effects and actions criminal, it is merely by accident that men are abused into a sin; that is, by weakness, by misconceit, by something that either discovers malice or indiscretion; which, because the act itself does not of itself, if the man does not voluntarily or by intention, the sin dwells no where but with the man that entertains it: the man is no longer weak than he is mistaken, and he is not mistaken or abused into the sin, by example of any man who hath rightly stated his own question, and divorced the suspicion of the sin from his action; whatsoever comes after this, is not weakness of understanding, but strength of passion; and he that is "always learning, and never comes to the knowledge of the truth," is something besides a silly man. Men cannot be always "babes in Christ,"[f] without their own fault; they are no longer "Christ's little ones" than they are inculpably ignorant. For it is but a mantle cast over pride and frowardness to think ourselves able to teach others, and yet pretend offence and scandal; to scorn to be instructed, and yet complain that we are offended, and led into sin for want of knowledge of our duty. He that understands his duty, is not a person capable of scandal by things indifferent. And it is certain, that no man can say, concerning himself, that he is scandalized at another; that is, that he is led into sin by mistake and weakness; for if himself knows it, the mistake is gone. Well may the guides of their souls complain, concerning such persons, that their sin is procured by offending persons or actions; but he that complains concerning himself, to the same purpose, pretends ignorance for other ends, and contradicts himself by his complaint and knowledge of his error. The boy was prettily peevish, who, when his father bade him pronounce Thalassius, told him he could not pronounce Thalassius, at the same time speaking the word: just so impotent, weak, and undiscerning a person is that, who would forbid me to do an indifferent action, upon pretence that it makes him ignorantly sin; for his saying so confutes his ignorance, and argues him of a worse folly: it is like asking my neighbour, whether such an action be done against my own will.

11. Seventhly: When an action is apt to be mistaken to contrary purposes, it concerns the prudence and charity of a christian, to use such compliance, as best co-operates to God's glory, and hath in it the less danger. The apostles gave an instance in the matter of circumcision, in which they walked warily, and with variety of design, that they might invite the gentiles to the easy yoke of christianity, and yet not deter the Jews, by a disrespect of the law of Moses. And therefore St. Paul circumcised Timothy, because he was among the Jews, and descended from a Jewish parent; and in the instance gave sentence in compliance with the Jewish persuasion, because Timothy might well be accounted for a Jew by birth; unto them the rites of Moses were for a while permitted. But when Titus was brought upon the scene of a mixed assembly, and was no Jew, but a Greek, to whom Paul had taught "they ought not to be circumcised;"[g] although some Jews watched what he would do, yet he plainly refused to circumcise him, choosing rather to leave the Jews angry, than the gentiles scandalized, or led into an opinion that circumcision was necessary, or that he had taught them otherwise out of collateral ends, or that now he did so. But when a case of christian liberty happened to St. Peter, he was not so prudent in his choice; but, at the coming of certain Jews from Jerusalem, withdrew himself from the society of the gentiles; not considering, that it was worse if the gentiles, who were invited to christianity by the sweetness of its liberty and compliance, should fall back, when they that taught them the excellency of christian liberty durst not stand to it, than if those Jews were displeased at christianity, for admitting gentiles into its communion, after they had been instructed that God had broken down the partition-wall, and made them one sheepfold. It was of greater concernment to God's glory, to gain the gentiles, than to retain the Jews; and yet if it had not, the apostles were bound to bend to the inclinations of the weaker, rather than be mastered by the wilfulness of the stronger, who had been sufficiently instructed in the articles of christian liberty, and in the adopting the gentiles into the family of God. Thus, if it be a question, whether I should abate any thing of my external religion or ceremonies, to satisfy an heretic or a contentious person, who pretends scandal to himself, and is, indeed, of another persuasion; and at the same time I know, that good persons would be weakened at such forbearance, and estranged from the good persuasion and charity of communion, which is part of their duty; it more concerns charity and the glory of God, that I secure the right, than twine about the wrong, wilful, and malicious persons. A prelate must rather fortify and encourage obedience, and strengthen discipline, than by remissness toward refractory spirits, and a desire not to seem severe, weaken the hands of conscientious persons, by taking away the marks of difference between them that obey and them that obey not: and in all cases, when the question is between a friend to be secured from apostasy, or an enemy to be gained from indifferency, St. Paul's

[f] Ἀσθενεῖς τῇ πίστει. Rom. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12.

[g] Gal. ii. 3, 4, &c.

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rule is to be observed: "Do good to all, but especially to the household of faith." When the church, in a particular instance, cannot be kind to both, she must first love her own children.

12. Eighthly: But when the question is between pleasing and contenting the fancies of a friend, and the gaining of an enemy, the greater good of the enemy is infinitely to be preferred, before the satisfying the unnecessary humour of the friend; and, therefore, that we may gain persons of a different religion, it is lawful to entertain them in their innocent customs: that we may represent ourselves charitable and just, apt to comply in what we can, and yet for no end complying farther than we are permitted. It was a policy of the devil, to abuse christians to the rites of Mithra, by imitating the christian ceremonies; and the christians themselves were beforehand with him in that policy; for they facilitated the reconcilement of Judaism with christianity by common rites, and invited the gentiles to the christian churches, because they never violated the heathen temples, but loved the men, and imitated their innocent rites, and only offered to reform their errors, and hallow their abused purposes: and this, if it had no other contradictory or unhandsome circumstance, gave no offence to other christians, when they had learned to trust them with the government of ecclesiastical affairs, to whom God had committed them: and they all had the same purposes of religion and charity. And when there is no objection against this, but the furies or greater heats of a mistaken zeal, the compliance with evil or unbelieving persons, to gain them from their errors to the ways of truth and sincerity, is great prudence and great charity; because it chooses and acts a greater good, at no other charge or expense but the discomposing of an intemperate zeal.

13. Ninthly: We are not bound to intermit a good or a lawful action, as soon as any man tells us it is scandalous; (for that may be an easy stratagem to give me laws, and destroy my liberty;) but either when the action is of itself, or by reason of a public known indisposition of some persons, probably introductive of a sin; or when we know it is so in fact. The other is but affrighting a man; this only is prudent, that my charity be guided by such rules, which determine wise men to actions or omissions respectively. And, therefore, a light fame is not strong enough to wrest my liberty from me; but a reasonable belief, or a certain knowledge, in the taking of which estimate we must neither be too credulous and easy, nor yet ungentle and stubborn, but do according to the actions of wise men and the charities of a christian. Hither we may refer the rules of abstaining from things which are of evil report. For not every thing which is of good report is to be followed; for then a false opinion, when it is become popular, must be professed for conscience sake: nor yet every thing that is of bad report is to be avoided; for nothing endured more shame and obloquy than christianity, at its first commencement. But by "good report," we are to understand such things, which are well reported of by good men and wise men, or Scripture, or the consent of nations. And thus, for a woman to marry within the year of mourning is scandalous; because it is of evil report, gives suspicion of lightness, or some worse confederacy, before the death of her husband. The thing itself is apt to minister the suspicion, and this we are bound to prevent; and unless the suspicion be malicious, or imprudent and unreasonable, we must conceal our actions from the surprises and deprehensions of suspicion. It was scandalous amongst the old Romans not to marry; among the christians, for a clergyman to marry twice, because it was against an apostolical canon: but when it became of ill report for any christian to marry a second time, because this evil report was begun by the errors of Montanus, and is against a permission of holy Scripture, no lay christian was bound to abstain from a second bed, for fear of giving scandal.

14. Tenthly: The precept of avoiding scandal concerns the governors of the church or state, in the making and execution of laws. For no law in things indifferent ought to be made to the provocation of the subject, or against that public disposition, which is in the spirits of men; and will, certainly, cause perpetual irregularities and schisms. Before the law be made, the superior must comply with the subject; after it is made, the subject must comply with the law. But in this, the church hath made fair provision, accounting no laws obligatory, till the people have accepted them, and given tacit approbation: for ecclesiastical canons have their time of probation; and if they become a burden to the people, or occasion schisms, tumults, public disunion of affections, and jealousies against authority, the laws give place, and either fix not when they are not first approved, or disappear by desuetude. And in the execution of laws, no less care is to be taken; for many cases occur, in which the laws can be rescued from being a snare to men's consciences, by no other way but by dispensation, and slacking of the discipline as to certain particulars. Mercy and sacrifice, the letter and the spirit, the words and the intention, the general case and the particular exception, the present disposition and the former state of things, are oftentimes so repugnant, and of such contradictory interests, that there is no stumbling-block more troublesome or dangerous, than a severe literal and rigorous exacting of laws in all cases. But when stubbornness or a contentious spirit, when rebellion and pride, when secular interest, or ease and licentiousness, set men up against the laws, the laws then are upon the defensive, and ought not to give place. It is ill to cure particular disobedience, by removing a constitution, decreed by public wisdom, for a general good. When the evil occasioned by the law is greater than the good designed, or than the good which will come by it in the present constitution of things, and the evil can by no other remedy be healed, it concerns the lawgiver's charity to take off such positive constitutions, which in the authority are merely human, and in the matter indifferent, and evil in the event. The sum of this whole duty I shall choose to represent, in the words of an excellent person,

St. Jerome: "We must, for the avoiding of scandal, quit every thing which may be omitted, without prejudice to the threefold truth, of life, of justice, and doctrine:" meaning, that what is not expressly commanded by God or our superiors, or what is not expressly commended as an act of piety and perfection, or what is not an obligation of justice; that is, in which the interest of a third person, or else our own christian liberty, is not totally concerned, all that is to be given in sacrifice to mercy, and to be made matter of edification and charity, but not of scandal; that is, of danger, and sin, and falling, to our neighbour.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who art made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, give us of thy abundant charity; that we may love the eternal benefit of our brother's soul, with a true, diligent, and affectionate care and tenderness. Give us a fellow-feeling of one another's calamities, a readiness to bear each other's burdens, aptness to forbear, wisdom to advise, counsel to direct, and a spirit of meekness and modesty trembling at our infirmities, fearful in our brother's dangers, and joyful in his restitution and securities. Lord, let all our actions be pious and prudent, ourselves "wise as serpents and innocent as doves," and our whole life exemplar, and just and charitable; that we may, like lamps shining in thy temple, serve thee, and enlighten others, and guide them to thy sanctuary; and that, shining clearly and burning zealously, when the Bridegroom shall come to bind up his jewels, and beautify his spouse, and gather his saints together, we, and all thy christian people, knit in a holy fellowship, may "enter into the joy of our Lord," and partake of the eternal refreshments of the kingdom of light and glory, where thou, O holy and eternal Jesu, livest and reignest in the excellencies of a kingdom, and the infinite durations of eternity. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

Of the Causes and Manner of the Divine Judgments.[a]

1. GOD'S judgments are like "the writing upon the wall," which was a missive of anger from God upon Belshazzar; it came upon an errand of revenge, and yet it was writ in so dark characters,[b] that none could read it but a prophet. Whenever God speaks from heaven, he would have us to understand his meaning; and if he declares not his sense in particular signification, yet we understand his meaning well enough, if every voice of God lead us to repentance. Every sad accident is directed against sin, either to prevent it, or to cure it; to glorify God, or to humble us; to make us go forth of ourselves, and to rest upon the centre of all felicities, that we may derive help from the same hand that smote us. Sin and punishment are so near relatives, that when God hath marked any person with a sadness or unhandsome accident, men think it warrant enough for their uncharitable censures, and condemn the man whom God hath smitten, making God the executioner of our uncertain or ungentle sentences. "Whether sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" said the Pharisees to our blessed Lord. "Neither this man nor his parents," was the answer: meaning, that God had other ends in that accident to serve; and it was not an effect of wrath, but a design of mercy, both directly and collaterally. God's glory must be seen clearly, by occasion of the curing the blind man. But, in the present case, the answer was something different. Pilate slew the Galileans when they were sacrificing in their conventicles apart from the Jews. For they first had separated from obedience, and paying tribute to Cæsar; and then from the church, who disavowed their mutinous and discontented doctrines. The causes of the one and the other are linked in mutual complications and endearment; and he who despises the one will quickly disobey the other. Presently, upon the report of this sad accident, the people ran to the judgment-seat, and every man was ready to be accuser, and witness, and judge, upon these poor destroyed people. But Jesus allays their heat: and though he would by no means acquit these persons from deserving death for their denying tribute to Cæsar, yet he alters the face of the tribunal, and makes those persons, who were so apt to be accusers and judges, to act another part, even of guilty persons too, that, since they will needs be judging, they might judge themselves: for "Think not these were greater sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things. I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;"[c] meaning, that although there was great probability to believe such persons, schismatics (I mean) and rebels, to be the greatest sinners of the world, yet themselves, who had designs to destroy the Son of God, had deserved as great damnation. And yet it is observable, that the holy Jesus only compared the sins of them that suffered, with the estate of the other Galileans who suffered not; and that also applies it to the persons present who told the news: to consign this truth unto us, that when persons, confederate in the same crimes, are spared from a present judgment falling upon others of their own society, it is indeed a strong alarm to all to secure themselves by repentance against the hostilities and eruptions of sin;[d] but yet it is no exemption or security to them that escape, to believe themselves persons less sinful: for God sometimes decimates or tithes delinquent persons, and they die for a common crime, according

[a] Ad Num. 21, et 27.
[b] Παντῇ δ' ἀθανάτων ἀφανὴς νόος ἀνθρώποισι.—SOLON.
[c] Luke xiii. 2, 3.
[d] ——Χρόνῳ τοι κυρία τ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
Θεοῦς ἀτίζων τις βροτῶν δώσει δίκην.—ÆSCH. Ἱκετίδες.

Pius scilicet Deus partem percussit sententiæ suæ gladio, ut partem corrigeret exemplo, probaretque omnibus simul et coërcendo censuram, et indulgendo pietatem.—SALVIAN.

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as God hath cast their lot in the decrees of predestination; and either they that remain are sealed up to a worse calamity, or left within the reserves and mercies of repentance; for in this there is some variety of determination and undiscerned providence.

2. The purpose of our blessed Saviour is of great use to us in all the traverses and changes, and especially the sad and calamitous accidents, of the world. But in the misfortune of others, we are to make other discourses concerning Divine judgments, than when the case is of nearer concernment to ourselves. For, first, when we see a person come to an unfortunate and untimely death,[e] we must not conclude such a man perishing and miserable to all eternity. It was a sad calamity that fell upon the man of Judah, that returned to eat bread into the prophet's house contrary to the word of the Lord: he was abused into the act by a prophet and a pretence of a command from God; and whether he did violence to his own understanding, and believed the man because he was willing, or did it in sincerity, or in what degree of sin or excuse the action might consist, no man there knew: and yet a lion slew him, and the lying prophet that abused him escaped, and went to his grave in peace. Some persons joined in society or interest with criminals,[f] have perished in the same judgments; and yet it would be hard to call them equally guilty, who, in the accident, were equally miserable and involved. And they who are not strangers in the affairs of the world, cannot but have heard or seen some persons, who have lived well and moderately, though not like the flames of the holocaust, yet, like the ashes of incense, sending up good perfumes, and keeping a constant and slow fire of piety and justice, yet have been surprised in the midst of some unusual, unaccustomed irregularity, and died in that sin: a sudden gaiety of fortune, a great joy, a violent change, a friend is come, or a marriage-day, hath transported some persons to indiscretions and too bold a license; and the indiscretion hath betrayed them to idle company, and the company to drink, and drink to a fall, and that hath hurried them to their grave. And it were a sad sentence to think God would not repute the untimely death for a punishment great enough to that deflexion from duty, and judge the man according to the constant tenour of his former life; unless such an act was of malice great enough to outweigh the former habits, and interrupt the whole state of acceptation and grace. Something like this was the case of Uzzah, who espying the tottering ark, went to support it with an unhallowed hand: God smote him, and he died immediately. It were too severe to say, his zeal and indiscretion carried him beyond a temporal death to the ruins of eternity. Origen, and many others, have "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," and did well after it; but those that did so, and died of the wound, were smitten of God, and died in their folly; and yet it is rather to be called a sad consequence of their indiscretion, than the express of a final anger from God Almighty. For as God takes off our sins and punishments by parts, remitting to some persons the sentence of death, and inflicting the fine of a temporal loss, or the gentle scourge of a lesser sickness: so also he lays it on by parts, and according to the proper proportions of the man and of the crime; and every transgression and lesser deviation from our duty does not drag the soul to death eternal, but God suffers our repentance, though imperfect, to have an imperfect effect, knocking off the fetters by degrees, and leading us in some cases to a council, in some to judgment, and in some to hell-fire: but it is not always certain that he who is led to the prison-doors, shall there lie entombed; and a man may, by a judgment, be brought to the gates of hell, and yet those gates shall not prevail against him. This discourse concerns persons, whose life is habitually fair and just, but are surprised in some unhandsome, but less criminal, action, and die, or suffer some great calamity, as the instrument of its expiation or amendment.

3. Secondly: But if the person upon whom the judgment falls be habitually vicious, or the crime of a clamorous nature or deeper tincture; if the man "sin a sin unto death," and either meets it, or some other remarkable calamity not so feared as death; provided we pass no farther than the sentence we see then executed, it is not against charity or prudence to say, this calamity, in its own formality, and by the intention of God, is a punishment and judgment. In the favourable cases of honest and just persons, our sentence and opinions ought also to be favourable, and, in such questions, to incline ever to the side of charitable construction, and read other ends of God in the accidents of our neighbour than revenge or express wrath. But when the impiety of a person is scandalous and notorious, when it is clamorous and violent, when it is habitual and yet corrigible, if we find a sadness and calamity dwelling with such a sinner, especially if the punishment be spiritual, we read the sentence of God written with his own hand, and it is not sauciness of opinion, or a pressing into the secrets of Providence, to say the same thing which God hath published to all the world in the expresses of his Spirit. In such cases we are to observe the "severity of God, on them that fall severity;" and to use those judgments as instruments of the fear of God, and arguments to hate sin; which we could not well do, but that we must look on them as verifications of God's threatening against great and impenitent sinners. But then, if we descend to particulars, we may easily be deceived.

4. For some men are diligent to observe the accidents and chances of Providence upon those especially who differ from them in opinion; and

[e] De Ananiâ et Sapphirâ, dixit Origines, digni enim erant in hoc seculo recipere peccatum suum, ut mundiores exeant ab hac vitâ, mundati castigatione sibi illatâ per mortem communem, quoniam credentes erant in Christum. Idem ait S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 1. cont. Parmen. et Cassian.

[f] ——Vetabo qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgârit arcanæ, sub iisdem
Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum: sæpe Diespiter,
Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 2.

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whatever ends God can have, or whatever sins man can have, yet we lay that in fault, which we therefore hate, because it is most against our interest; the contrary opinion is our enemy, and we also think God hates it. But such fancies do seldom serve either the ends of truth or charity. Pierre Calceon died under the barber's hand;[g] there wanted not some, who said it was a judgment upon him for condemning to the fire the famous Pucelle of France, who prophesied the expulsion of the English out of the kingdom. They that thought this, believed her to be a prophetess; but others, that thought her a witch, were willing to find out another conjecture for the sudden death of the gentleman. Garnier, earl of Gretz, kept the patriarch of Jerusalem from his right in David's tower and the city, and died within three days; and, by Dabert the patriarch, it was called a judgment upon him for his sacrilege. But the uncertainty of that censure appeared to them, who considered that Baldwin (who gave commission to Garnier to withstand the patriarch) did not die; but Godfrey of Bouillon did die immediately after he had passed the right of the patriarch: and yet, when Baldwin was beaten at Rhamula, some bold people pronounced, that then God punished him upon the patriarch's score, and thought his sacrilege to be the secret cause of his overthrow;[h] and yet his own pride and rashness was the more visible, and the judgment was but a cloud, and passed away quickly into succeeding victory. But I instance in a trifle. Certain it is, that God removed the candlestick from the Levantine churches, because he had a quarrel unto them; for that punishment is never sent upon pure designs of emendation, or for direct and immediate purposes of the Divine glory, but ever makes reflection upon the past sin: but when we descend to a judgment of the particulars, God walks so in the dark to us, that it is not discerned upon what ground he smote them. Some say it was because they dishonoured the eternal Jesus, in denying the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son. And in this some thought themselves sufficiently assured by a sign from heaven,[i] because the Greeks lost Constantinople upon Whitsunday, the day of the festival of the Holy Spirit. The church of Rome calls the churches of the Greek communion schismatical, and thinks God righted the Roman quarrel when he revenged his own. Some think they were cut off for being breakers of images; others think that their zeal against images was a means they were cut off no sooner; and yet he that shall observe what innumerable sects, heresies, and factions were commenced amongst them, and how they were wanton with religion, making it serve ambitious and unworthy ends, will see that, besides the ordinary conjectures of interested persons, they had such causes of their ruin, which we also now feel heavily incumbent upon ourselves. To see God adding eighteen years to the life of Hezekiah upon his prayer, and yet cutting off the young son of David begotten in adulterous embraces; to see him rejecting Adonijah, and receiving Solomon to the kingdom, begotten of the same mother, whose son God in anger formerly slew; to observe his mercies to Manasses, in accepting him to favour, and continuing the kingdom to him, and his severity to Zedekiah, in causing his eyes to be put out; to see him rewarding Nebuchadnezzar with the spoils of Egypt for destroying Tyre, and executing God's severe anger against it, and yet punishing others for being executioners of his wrath upon Jerusalem, even then when he purposed to chastise it; to see Wenceslaus raised from a peasant to a throne, and Pompey, from a great prince, reduced to that condition, that a pupil and an eunuch passed sentence of death upon him; to see great fortunes fall into the hand of a fool, and honourable old persons, and learned men, descend to unequal beggary; to see him strike a stroke with his own hand in the conversion of Saul, and another quite contrary in the cutting off of Judas, must needs be some restraint to our judgments concerning the general state of those men who lie under the rod; but it proclaims an infinite uncertainty in the particulars, since we see contrary accidents happening to persons guilty of the same crime, or put in the same indispositions. God hath marked all great sins with some signal and express judgments, and hath transmitted the records of them, or represented them before our eyes; that is, hath done so in our age, or it hath been noted to have been done before; and that being sufficient to affright us from those crimes, God hath not thought it expedient to do the same things to all persons in the same cases, having to all persons produced instances and examples of fear by fewer accidents, sufficient to restrain us, but not enough to pass sentence upon the changes of Divine providence.

5. But sometimes God speaks plainer, and gives us notice what crimes he punishes in others, that we may the rather decline such rocks of offence. If the crime and the punishment be symbolical, and have proportion and correspondence of parts, the hand of God strikes the man, but holds up one finger to point at the sin. The death of the child of Bathsheba was a plain declaration, that the anger of God was upon David for the adulterous mixture. That blasphemer, whose tongue was presently struck with an ulcerous tumour, with his tongue declared the glories of God and his own shame. And it was not doubted but God, when he smote the lady of Dominicus Silvius, the duke of Venice, with a loathsome and unsavoury disease, did intend to chastise a remarkable vanity of hers in various and costly perfumes, which she affected in an unreasonable manner, and to very evil purposes. And that famous person, and of excellent learning, Giacchettus of Geneva,[k] being by his wife found dead in the unlawful embraces of a stranger woman, who also died at the same instant, left an excellent example of

[g] Pendula dum tonsor secat excrementa capilli,
Exspirans cadit, et gelidâ tellure cadaver
Decubat: ultrices sic pendunt crimina pœnas.
VALERAND.

[h] Baron. A. D. 1100 et 2024.
[i] Estius.
[k] Fulgos. lib. ix. c. 12.

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God's anger upon the crime, and an evidence that he was then judged for his intemperate lust. Such are all those punishments, which are natural consequents to a crime: as dropsies, redness of eyes, dissolution of nerves, apoplexies,[1] to continual drunkenness; to intemperate eating, short lives and sudden deaths; to lust, a caitive slavish disposition, and a foul diseased body; fire and sword, and depopulation of towns and villages, the consequents of ambition and unjust wars; poverty to prodigality; and all those judgments which happen upon cursings and horrid imprecations, when God is, under a curse, called to attest a lie, and to connive at impudence; or when the oppressed persons, in the bitterness of their souls, wish evil and pray for vengeance on their oppressors; or that the church, upon just cause, inflicts spiritual censures, and "delivers unto Satan," or curses and declares the Divine sentence against sinners, as St. Peter against Ananias and Sapphira, and St. Paul against Elymas, and of old, Moses against Pharaoh and his Egypt. (Of this nature also was the plague of a withered hand inflicted upon Jeroboam, for stretching forth his hand to strike the prophet.) In these, and all such instances, the offspring is so like the parent, that it cannot easily be concealed. Sometimes the crime is of that nature, that it cries aloud for vengeance, or is threatened with a special kind of punishment, which, by the observation and experience of the world, hath regularly happened to a certain sort of persons: such as are dissolutions of estates, the punishment of sacrilege; a descending curse upon posterity for four generations, specially threatened to the crime of idolatry; any plague whatsoever to oppression; untimely death to murder; an unthriving estate to the detention of tithes, or whatsoever is God's portion allotted for the services of religion: untimely and strange deaths to the persecutors of christian religion: Nero killed himself; Domitian was killed by his servants; Maximinus and Decius were murdered, together with their children; Valerianus imprisoned, flayed, and slain with tortures, by Sapor, king of Persia; Diocletian perished by his own hand, and his house was burnt with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, with fire from above; Antiochus, the president under Aurelian, while Agapetus was in his agony and sufferance of martyrdom, cried out of a flame within him, and died; Flaccus vomited out his entrails presently after he had caused Gregory, bishop of Spoleto, to be slain; and Dioscorus, the father of St. Barbara, accused and betrayed his daughter to the hangman's cruelty for being a christian, and he died by the hand of God by fire from heaven. These are God's tokens, marks upon the body of infected persons, and declare the malignity of the disease, and bid us all beware of those determined crimes.

6. Thirdly: But then, in these and all other accidents, we must first observe from the cause to the effect, and then judge from the effect concerning the nature and the degree of the cause. We cannot conclude, This family is lessened, beggared, or extinct, therefore they are guilty of sacrilege: but thus, They are sacrilegious, and God hath blotted out their name from among the posterities, therefore this judgment was an express of God's anger against sacrilege: the judgment will not conclude a sin, but when a sin infers the judgment with a legible character and a prompt signification, not to understand God's choice is next to stupidity or carelessness. Arius was known to be a seditious, heretical, and dissembling person, and his entrails descended on the earth, when he went to cover his feet:[m] it was very suspicious that this was the punishment of those sins, which were the worst in him: but he that shall conclude Arius was an heretic or seditious, upon no other ground but because his bowels gushed out, begins imprudently, and proceeds uncharitably. But it is considerable, that men do not arise to great crimes on the sudden, but by degrees of carelessness to lesser impieties, and then to clamorous sins: and God is therefore said to punish great crimes, or actions of highest malignity, because they are commonly productions from the spirit of reprobation; they are the highest ascents, and suppose a body of sin. And therefore, although the judgment may be intended to punish all our sins, yet it is like the Syrian army, it kills all that are its enemies, but it hath a special commission "to fight against none but the king of Israel," because his death would be the dissolution of the body. And if God humbles a man for his great sin, that is, for those acts which combine and consummate all the rest, possibly the body of sin may separate, and be apt to be scattered and subdued by single acts and instruments of mortification: and therefore it is but reasonable, in our making use of God's judgments upon others, to think that God will rather strike at the greatest crimes; not only because they are in themselves of greatest malice and iniquity, but because they are the sum total of the rest, and, by being great progressions in the state of sin, suppose all the rest included; and we, by proportioning and observing the judgment to the highest, acknowledge the whole body of sin to lie under the curse, though the greatest only was named, and called upon with the voice of thunder. And yet, because it sometimes happens, that, upon the violence of a great and new occasion, some persons leap into such a sin, which, in the ordinary course of sinners, uses to be the effect of an habitual and growing state, then, if a judgment happens, it is clearly appropriate to that one great crime, which, as of itself it is equivalent to a vicious habit, and

[1] Pœna tamen præsens, cùm tu deponis amictum
Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas.
Hinc subitæ mortes atque intestata senectus.
JUVEN. Sat. 1.

Quos nimis effrænos habui, nunc vapulo renes.
Sic luitur juvenis culpa dolore senis.

[m] ——— Ruit Arius alvo
Infelix plus mente cadens, lethumque peremptus
Cum Juda commune tulit, qui gutture pendens
Visceribus curvatus obit: nec pœna sequestrat
Quos par culpa ligat, qui majestatis honori
Vulnus ab ore parant. Hic prodidit, ille diremit
Sacrilegâ de voce. ———
Poet. Christ. apud Baron. T. 3. ad ann. Christ. 336.

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interrupts the acceptation of all its former contraries, so it meets with a curse, such as usually God chooses for the punishment of a whole body and state of sin. However, in making observation upon the expresses of God's anger, we must be careful that we reflect not with any bitterness or scorn upon the person of our calamitous brother, lest we make that to be an evil to him, which God intends for his benefit, if the judgment was medicinal; or that we increase the load, already great enough to sink him beneath his grave, if the judgment was intended for a final abscission.

7. Fourthly: But if the judgments descend upon ourselves, we are to take another course; not to inquire into particulars to find out the proportions, (for that can only be a design to part with just so much as we must needs,) but to amend all that is amiss; for then only we can be secure to remove the Achan, when we keep nothing within us, or about us, that may provoke God to jealousy or wrath. And that is the proper product of holy fear, which God intended should be the first effect of all his judgments: and of this God is so careful, and yet so kind and provident, that fear might not be produced always at the expense of a great suffering, that God hath provided for us certain prologues of judgment, and keeps us waking with alarms, that so he might reconcile his mercies with our duties. Of this nature are epidemical diseases, not yet arrived at us, prodigious tempests, thunder and loud noises from heaven; and he that will not fear, when God speaks so loud, is not yet made soft with the impresses and perpetual droppings of religion. Venerable Bede reports of St. Chad,[n] that if a great gust of wind suddenly arose, he presently made some holy ejaculation, to beg favour of God for all mankind who might possibly be concerned in the effects of that wind; but, if a storm succeeded, he fell prostrate to the earth, and grew as violent in prayer as the storm was, either at land or sea. But if God added thunder and lightning, he went to the church, and there spent all his time, during the tempest, in reciting litanies, psalms, and other holy prayers, till it pleased God to restore his favour, and to seem to forget his anger. And the good bishop added this reason; because these are the extensions and stretchings forth of God's hand, and yet he did not strike: but he that trembles not, when he sees God's arm held forth to strike us, understands neither God's mercies, nor his own danger; he neither knows what those horrors were, which the people saw from mount Sinai, nor what the glories and amazement shall be at the great day of judgment. And if this religious man had seen Tullus Hostilius, the Roman king, and Anastasius, a christian emperor, but a reputed heretic, struck dead with thunderbolts, and their own houses made their urns, to keep their ashes in; there could have been no posture humble enough, no prayers devout enough, no place holy enough, nothing sufficiently expressive of his fear, and his humility, and his adoration, and religion, to the almighty and infinite power, and glorious mercy, of God, sending out his emissaries to denounce war with designs of peace. A great Italian general, seeing the sudden death of Alfonsus, duke of Ferrara, kneeled down instantly, saying, "And shall not this sight make me religious?" Three and twenty thousand fell,[o] in one night, in the Israelitish camp, who were all slain for fornication. And this so prodigious a judgment was recorded in Scripture for our example and affrightment, that we should not, with such freedom, entertain a crime which destroyed so numerous a body of men in the darkness of one evening. Fear, and modesty, and universal reformation, are the purposes of God's judgments upon us, or in our neighbourhood.

8. Fifthly: Concerning judgments happening to a nation, or a church, the consideration is particular, because there are fewer capacities of making sins to become national than personal; and therefore if we understand when a sin is national, we may the rather understand the meaning of God's hand, when he strikes a people. For national sins grow higher and higher, not merely according to the degree of the sin, or the intention alone, but according to the extension; according to its being national, so it is productive of more or less mischief to a kingdom. Customary iniquities amongst the people do then amount to the account of national sins, when they are of so universal practice as to take in well near every particular;[p] such as was that of Sodom, not to leave "ten righteous" in all the country: and such were the sins of the old world, who left but "eight persons" to escape the angry baptism of the flood. And such was the murmur of the children of Israel, refusing to march up to Canaan at the commandment of God, they all murmured but Caleb and Joshua; and this, God, in the case of the Amalekites, calls "the fulfilling of their sins," and a "filling up the measure of their iniquities." And hither also I reckon the defection of the ten tribes from the house of Judah, and the Samaritan schism: these caused the total extirpation of the offending people. For although these sins were personal and private at first, yet, when they come to be universal, by diffusion and dissemination, and the good people remaining among them are but like drops of wine in a tun of water, of no consideration with God, save only to the preservation "of their own persons;"[q] then, although the persons be private, yet all private or singular persons make the nation. But this hath happened but seldom in christianity: I think indeed never, except in the case of mutinies and rebellion against their lawful prince, or the attesting violence done in unjust wars. But God only knows, and no man can say, when any sin is national by diffusion; and therefore, in this case, we cannot make any certain judgment or advantage to ourselves, or very rarely, by observing the changes of Providence upon a people.

9. But the next above this, in order to the pro-

[n] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. iii. c. 18.

[o] 1 Cor. x. 8.

[p] Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primùm inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 6.

[q] Ezek. xiv. 20.

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curing popular judgments, is public impunities, the not doing justice upon criminals publicly complained of and demanded, especially when the persons interested call for justice and execution of good laws, and the prince's arm is at liberty and in full strength, and there is no contrary reason, in the particular instance, to make compensation to the public for the omission, or no care taken to satisfy the particular. Abimelech thought he had reason to be angry with Isaac, for saying Rebecca was his sister; for "one of the people might have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought evil upon us:" meaning that the man should have escaped unpunished, by reason of the mistake, which very impunity he feared might be expounded to be a countenance and encouragement to the sin. But this was no more than his fear. The case of the Benjamites comes home to this present article; for they refused to do justice upon the men that had ravished and killed the Levite's concubine; they lost twenty-five thousand in battle, their cities were destroyed, and the whole tribe almost extinguished. For punishing public and great acts of injustice is called, in Scripture, "putting away the evil from the land;"[r] because, to this purpose, the sword is put into the prince's hand, and he "bears the sword in vain," who ceases to protect his people: and not to punish the evil is a voluntary retention of it, unless a special case intervene, in which the prince thinks it convenient to give a particular pardon; provided this be not encouragement to others, nor, without great reason, big enough to make compensation for the particular omission, and, with care, to render some other satisfaction to the person injured: in all other cases of impunity, that sin becomes national by forbearing, which, in the acting, was personal; and it is certain the impunity is a spring of universal evils, it is no thank to the public, if the best man be not as bad as the worst.

10. But there is a step beyond this, and of a more public concernment: such are the "laws of Omri," when a nation consents to and makes ungodly statutes; when "mischief is established as a law," then the nation is engaged to some purpose. When I see the people despise their governors, scorn, and rob, and disadvantage the ministers of religion, make rude addresses to God, to his temple, to his sacraments; I look upon it as the insolence of an untaught people, who would as readily do the contrary, if the fear of God and the king were upon them by good examples, and precepts, and laws, and severe executions. And further yet, when the more public and exemplar persons are without sense of religion, without a dread of majesty, without reverence to the church, without impresses of conscience and the tendernesses of a religious fear towards God; as the persons are greater in estimation of law, and in their influences upon the people, so the score of the nation advances, and there is more to be paid for in popular judgments. But when iniquity or irreligion is made a sanction, and either God must be dishonoured, or the church exauthorated, or her rites invaded by a law; then the fortune of the kingdom is at stake.[s] No sin engages a nation so much, or is so public, so solemn iniquity, as is a wicked law. Therefore, it concerns princes and states to secure the piety and innocency of their laws; and if there be any evil laws, which, upon just grounds, may be thought productive of God's anger, because a public misdemeanour cannot be expiated but by a public act of repentance, or a public calamity, the laws must either have their edge abated by a desuetude, or be laid asleep by a non-execution, or dismembered by contrary provisoes, or have the sting drawn forth by interpretation, or else, by abrogation, be quite rescinded. But these are national sins within itself, or within its own body, by the act of the body (I mean) diffusive or representative, and they are like the personal sins of men in or against their own bodies, in the matter of sobriety. There are others in the matter of justice, as the nation relates to other people communicating in public intercourse.

11. For as the intercourse between man and man, in the actions of commutative and distributive justice, is the proper matter of virtues and vices personal; so are the transactions between nation and nation, against the public rules of justice, sins national directly, and in their first original, and answer to injustice between man and man. Such are commencing war upon unjust titles, invasion of neighbours' territories, confederacies and aids upon tyrannical interest, wars against true religion or sovereignty, violation of the laws of nations, which they have consented to as the public instrument of accord and negociation, breach of public faith, defending pirates, and the like. When a public judgment comes upon a nation, these things are to be thought upon, that we may not think ourselves acquitted by crying out against swearing, and drunkenness, and cheating in manufactures, which, unless they be of universal dissemination, and made national by diffusion, are paid for upon a personal score; and the private infelicities of our lives will either expiate or punish them severely. But while the people mourn for those sins of which their low condition is capable, sins that may produce a popular fever, or, perhaps, the plague, where the misery dwells in cottages, and the princes often have indemnity, as it was in the case of David: yet we may not hope to appease a war, to master a rebellion, to cure the public distemperatures of a kingdom, which threaten not the people only, or the governors also, but even the government itself, unless the sins of a more public capacity be cut off by public declarations, or other acts of national justice and religion. But the duty which concerns us, in all such cases, is, that every man, in every capacity, should inquire into himself, and for his own portion of the calamity, put in his own symbol of emendation for his particular, and his prayers for the public interest: in which it is not safe that

[r] Deut. xvii. 12. xix. 13, 19. xxi. 9, 21, et alibi.

[s] ——— Ilion, Ilion
Fatalis incestusque Judex,
Et mulier peregrina vertit
In pulverem, ex quo destituit Deos
Mercede pactâ Laomedon.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 3.

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any private persons should descend to particular censures of the crimes of princes and states, no, not towards God, unless the matter be notorious, and past a question; but it is a sufficient assoilment of this part of his duty, if, when he hath set his own house in order, he would pray with indefinite significations of his charity and care of the public, that God would put it into the hearts of all whom it concerns, to endeavour the removal of the sin, that hath brought the exterminating angel upon the nation. But yet there are, sometimes, great lines drawn by God, in the expresses of his anger, in some judgments upon a nation; and when the judgment is of that danger as to invade the very constitution of a kingdom, the proportions that judgments many times keep to their sins, intimate that there is some national sin, in which, either by diffusion or representation, or in the direct matter of sins, as false oaths, unjust wars, wicked confederacies, or ungodly laws, the nation, in the public capacity, is delinquent.

12. For as the nation hath, in sins, a capacity distinct from the sins of all the people, inasmuch as the nation is united in one head, guarded by a distinct and a higher angel, as Persia by St. Michael, transacts affairs in a public right, transmits influence to all particulars from a common fountain, and hath intercourse with other collective bodies, who also distinguish from their own particulars: so, likewise, it hath punishments distinct from those infelicities which vex particulars, punishments proportionable to itself, and to its own sins; such as are changes of governments, of better into worse, of monarchy into aristocracy, and so to the lowest ebb of democracy; death of princes, infant kings, foreign invasions, civil wars, a disputable title to the crown, making a nation tributary, conquest by a foreigner, and, which is worst of all, removing the candlestick from a people, by extinction of the church, or that which is necessary to its conservation, the several orders and ministries of religion: and the last hath also proper sins of its own analogy; such as are false articles in the public confessions of a church, schism from the catholic, public scandals, a general viciousness of the clergy, an indifference in religion, without warmth and holy fires of zeal, and diligent pursuance of all its just and holy interests.[t] Now in these, and all parallel cases, when God by punishments hath probably marked and distinguished the crime, it concerns public persons to be the more forward and importunate in consideration of public irregularities: and, for the private also, not to neglect their own particulars; for, by that means, although not certainly, yet probably, they may secure themselves from falling in the public calamity. It is not infallibly sure, that holy persons shall not be smitten by the destroying angel; for God, in such deaths, hath many ends of mercy, and some of providence, to serve: but such private and personal emendations and devotions, are the greatest securities of the men against the judgment, or the evil of it, preserving them in this life, or wafting them over to a better. Thus many of the Lord's champions did fall in battle, and the armies of the Benjamites did twice prevail upon the juster people of all Israel; and the Greek empire hath declined and shrunk, under the fortune and power of the Ottoman family; and the Holy Land, which was twice possessed by christian princes, is now in the dominion of unchristened Saracens; and, in the production of these alterations, many a gallant and pious person suffered the evils of war, and the change of an untimely death.

13. But the way for the whole nation to proceed, in cases of epidemical diseases, wars, great judgments, and popular calamities, is to do, in the public proportion, the same that every man is to do for his private; by public acts of justice, repentance, fastings, pious laws, and execution of just and religious edicts, making peace, quitting of unjust interests, declaring publicly against a crime, protesting in behalf of the contrary virtue or religion: and to this also, every man, as he is a member of the body politic, must co-operate; that, by a repentance in diffusion, help may come, as well as by a sin of universal dissemination the plague was hastened and invited the rather. But in these cases, all the work of discerning and pronouncing, concerning the cause of the judgment, as it must be without asperity, and only for designs of correction and emendation, so it must be done by kings and prophets, and the assistance of other public persons, to whom the public is committed. Joshua cast lots upon Achan, and discovered the public trouble in a private instance; and of old, the prophets had it in commission to reprove the popular iniquity of nations, and the confederate sins of kingdoms: and, in this, christianity altered nothing. And when this is done modestly, prudently, humbly, and penitently, oftentimes the tables turn immediately, but always in due time; and a great alteration in a kingdom becomes the greatest blessing in the world, and fastens the church, or the crown, or the public peace, in bands of great continuance and security; and, it may be, the next age shall feel the benefits of our sufferance and repentance. And, therefore, as we must endeavour to secure it, so we must not be too decretory in the case of others, or disconsolate or diffident in our own, when it may so happen, that all succeeding generations shall see, that God pardoned us, and loved us, even when he smote us. Let us all learn to fear, and walk humbly. The churches of Laodicea and the Colossians suffered a great calamity, within a little while after the Spirit of God had sent them two epistles, by the ministry of St. Paul; their cities were buried in an earthquake: and yet, we have reason to think, they were churches beloved of God, and congregations of holy people.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and powerful God! thou just and righteous Governor of the world! who callest all orders

[t] Diis te minorem quòd geris, imperas.
Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.
Dii multa neglecti dederunt
Hesperiæ mala luctuosæ.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 6.

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of men by precepts, promises, and threatenings, by mercies and by judgments; teach us to admire and adore all the wisdom, the effects, and infinite varieties of thy providence; and make us to dispose ourselves so, by obedience, by repentance, by all the manners of holy living, that we may never provoke thee to jealousy, much less to wrath and indignation against us. Keep far from us the sword of the destroying angel, and let us never perish in the public expresses of thy wrath, in diseases epidemical, with the furies of war, with calamitous, sudden, and horrid accidents, with unusual diseases; unless that our so strange fall be more for thy glory, and our eternal benefit, and then thy will be done: we beg thy grace, that we may cheerfully conform to thy holy will and pleasure. Lord, open our understandings, that we may know the meaning of thy voice, and the signification of thy language, when thou speakest from heaven in signs and judgments; and let a holy fear so soften our spirits, and an intense love so inflame and sanctify our desires, that we may apprehend every intimation of thy pleasure at its first, and remotest, and most obscure representment, that so we may, with repentance, go out to meet thee, and prevent the expresses of thine anger. Let thy restraining grace, and the observation of the issues of thy justice, so allay our spirits, that we be not severe and forward in condemning others, nor backward in passing sentence upon ourselves. Make us to obey thy voice, described in holy Scripture, to tremble at thy voice, expressed in wonders and great effects of providence, to condemn none but ourselves, nor to enter into the recesses of thy sanctuary, and search the forbidden records of predestination; but that we may read our duty in the pages of revelation, not in the labels of accidental effects; that thy judgments may confirm thy word, and thy word teach us our duty, and we, by such excellent instruments, may enter in, and grow up in the ways of godliness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SECTION XV.

Of the Accidents happening from the Death of Lazarus, until the Death and Burial of Jesus.

1. WHILE Jesus was in Galilee, messengers came to him from Martha and her sister Mary, that he would hasten into Judea, to Bethany, to relieve the sickness and imminent dangers of their brother Lazarus. But he deferred his going till Lazarus was dead; purposing to give a great probation of his divinity, power, and mission, by a glorious miracle; and to give God glory, and to receive reflections of the glory upon himself. For after he had staid two days, he called his disciples to go with him into Judea, telling them that Lazarus was dead, but he would raise him out of that sleep of death. But by that time Jesus was arrived at Bethany, "he found that Lazarus had been dead four days," and now near to putrefaction. But when Martha and Mary met him, weeping their pious tears for their dead brother, Jesus suffered the passions of pity and humanity, and wept, distilling that precious liquor into the grave of Lazarus; watering the dead plant, that it might spring into a new life, and raise his head above the ground.

2. When Jesus had, by his words of comfort and institution, strengthened the faith of the two mourning sisters, and commanded "the stone to be removed" from the grave, he made an address of adoration and eucharist to his Father, confessing his perpetual propensity to hear him, and then cried out, "Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth" from his bed of darkness, with his night-clothes on him: whom when the apostles had unloosed, at the command of Jesus, he went to Bethany: and many that were present "believed on him;" but others, wondering and malicious, went and told the Pharisees the story of the miracle, who, upon that advice, called their great council, whose great and solemn cognizance was of the greater causes of prophets, of kings, and of the holy law. At this great assembly it was, that Caiaphas, the high priest, prophesied, that it was "expedient one should die for the people. And thence they determined the death of Jesus." But he, knowing they had passed a decretory sentence against him, "retired to the city Ephraim," in the tribe of Judah, near the desert, where he staid a few days, till the approximation of the feast of Easter.

3. Against which feast, when Jesus, with his disciples, was going to Jerusalem, he told them the event of the journey would be, that the Jews "should deliver him to the gentiles;" that they "should scourge him, and mock him, and crucify him, and the third day he should rise again." After which discourse the mother of Zebedee's children begged of Jesus, for her two sons, that "one of them might sit at his right hand, the other at the left, in his kingdom." For no discourses of his passion, or intimations of the mysteriousness of his kingdom, could yet put them into right understandings of their condition. But Jesus, whose heart and thoughts were full of fancy, and apprehensions of the neighbour passion, gave them answer, in proportion to his present conceptions and their future condition. For if they desired the honours of his kingdom such as they were, they should have them, unless themselves did decline them; they "should drink of his cup," and dip in his lavatory, and be "washed with his baptism," and "sit in his kingdom," if the heavenly "Father had prepared it for" them; but the donation of that immediately was an issue of Divine election and predestination, and was only competent to them, who, by holy living and patient suffering, put themselves into a disposition of becoming vessels of election.

4. But as Jesus, in this journey, "came near Jericho," he cures "a blind man, who sat begging by the way-side:" and "espying Zaccheus, the chief

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of the publicans, upon a tree, (that he, being "low of stature," might upon that advantage of station see Jesus passing by,) he invited himself to his house; who "received him with gladness," and repentance of his crimes, purging his conscience, and filling his heart and house with joy and sanctity; for immediately upon the arrival of the Master at his house, he offered restitution to all persons whom he had injured, and satisfaction; and half of his remanent estate he "gave to the poor," and so gave the fairest entertainment to Jesus, who brought along with him "salvation to his house." There it was that he spake the parable of the king, who concredited divers talents to his servants, and having at his return exacted an account, rewarded them who had improved their bank, and been faithful in their trust, with rewards proportionable to their capacity and improvement; but the negligent servant, who had not meliorated his stock, was punished with ablegation and confinement to outer darkness. And from hence sprang up that dogmatical proposition, which is mysterious and determined in christianity; "To him that hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, shall be taken away even what he hath." After this, going forth of Jericho, he cured two blind men upon the way.

5. Six days before Easter, "Jesus came to Bethany," where he was feasted by Martha and Mary, and accompanied by Lazarus, who "sat at the table with Jesus." But "Mary brought a pound of nard pistic,"[a] and, as formerly she had done, again "anoints the feet of Jesus, and fills the house with the odour," till God himself smelt thence a savour of a sweet-smelling sacrifice. But Judas Iscariot, the thief and the traitor, repined at the vanity of the expense, (as he pretended,) because it might have been "sold for three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." But Jesus, in his reply, taught us, that there is an opportunity for actions of religion, as well as of charity. "Mary did this against the burial of Jesus," and her religion was accepted by him, to whose honours the holocaust of love and the oblations of alms-deeds are, in their proper seasons, direct actions of worship and duty. But, at this meeting, "there came many Jews to see Lazarus, who was raised from death, as well as to see Jesus:" and because, by occasion of his resurrection, "many of them believed on Jesus;" therefore the Pharisees "deliberated about putting him to death." But God, in his glorious providence, was pleased to preserve him as a trumpet of his glories, and a testimony of the miracle, thirty years after the death of Jesus.[b]

6. "The next day," being the fifth day before the passover, "Jesus came to the foot of the mount of Olives," and "sent his disciples to Bethphage, a village in the neighbourhood," commanding them to "unloose an ass and a colt, and bring them to him," and "to tell the owners it was done for the Master's use; and they did so:" and when they brought the ass to Jesus, he rides on him to Jerusalem; and "the people," having notice of his approach, "took branches of palm-trees, and went out to meet him, strewing branches and garments in the way, crying out, Hosanna to the Son of David!" which was a form of exclamation used to the honour of God, and in great solemnities, and signifies "adoration to the Son of David, by the rite of carrying branches;"[c] which when they used in procession about their altars, they used to pray, "Lord, save us; Lord, prosper us;" which hath occasioned the reddition of "Hoschiannah" to be, amongst some, that prayer which they repeated at the carrying of the "Hoschiannah," as if itself did signify, "Lord, save us." But this honour was so great and unusual to be done, even to kings,[d] that the Pharisees, knowing this to be an appropriate manner of address to God, said one to another, by way of wonder, "Hear ye what these men say?" For they were troubled to hear the people revere him as a God.

7. When Jesus, from the mount of Olives, beheld Jerusalem, he "wept over it," and foretold great sadnesses and infelicities futurely contingent to it; which not only happened in the sequel of the story, according to the main issues and significations of this prophecy, but even to minutes and circumstances it was verified. For in the mount of Olives, where Jesus shed tears over perishing Jerusalem, the Romans first pitched their tents, when they came to its final overthrow.[e] From thence descending to the city, he went into the temple, and still the acclamations followed him, till the Pharisees were ready to burst with the noises abroad, and the tumults of envy and scorn within; and by observing that all their endeavours to suppress his glories were but like clapping their hands to veil the sun; and that in despite of all their stratagems, the whole nation was become disciple to the glorious Nazarene. And there he cured certain persons, that were "blind and lame."

8. But whilst he abode at Jerusalem, "certain Greeks, who came to the feast to worship," made their address to Philip, that they might be brought to Jesus. "Philip tells Andrew, and they both tell Jesus;" who, having admitted them, discoursed many things concerning his passion, and then prayed a petition, which is the end of his own sufferings, and of all human actions, and the purpose of the whole creation, "Father, glorify thy name." To which he was answered by "a voice from heaven, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." But this, nor the whole series of miracles that he did, the mercies, the cures, nor the divine discourses, could gain the faith of all the Jews, who were determined by their human interest; for "many of the rulers who believed on him, durst not confess him, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Then Jesus again ex-

[a] Pisticam, id est, spicatam, corruptè, uti ex Latinis ferè solent Græci.—ERASM. in xiv. Marci.

[b] Epiphan. cont. Manich.

[c] Ὑψηλᾶν ἀρετᾶν καὶ Στεφάνων ἄωτον γλυκύν.—Olymp. v. 1. Pindarus vocat palmarum ramos, altissimarum virtutum et coronarum florem suavem.

[d] Drusius de Vocib. Heb. N. T. c. 19. Canin. de locis, N. T.

[e] Joseph. de bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 3.

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horted all men, "to believe on him, that so they might, in the same act, believe on God; that they might approach unto the light, and not abide in darkness; that they might obey the commandments of the Father, whose express charge it was, that Jesus should preach this gospel; and that they might not be judged at the last day by the word which they have rejected, which word, to all its observers, is everlasting life." After which sermon retiring to Bethany he abode there all night.

9. On the morrow, returning to Jerusalem, on the way being hungry, he passed by a fig-tree; where, expecting fruit, he found none, and cursed the fig-tree, which, by the next day, was dried up and withered; upon occasion of which preternatural event, Jesus discoursed of the power of faith, and its power to produce miracles. But upon this occasion, others,[1] the disciples of Jesus in after-ages, have pleased themselves with fancies and imperfect descants, as that he cursed this tree in mystery and secret intendment; it having been the tree, in the eating whose fruit, Adam, prevaricating the Divine law, made an inlet to sin, which brought in death, and the sadnesses of Jesus's passion. But Jesus, having entered the city, came into the temple, and preached the gospel; and the chief priests and scribes questioned his commission, and by what authority he did those things. But Jesus promising to answer them, if they would declare their opinions concerning John's baptism, which they durst not, for fear of "displeasing the people," or throwing dirt in their own faces, was acquitted of his obligation, by their declining the proposition.

10. But there he reproved the Pharisees and rulers, by the parable of two sons; "the first whereof said to his father, he would not obey, but repented, and did his command; the second gave good words, but did nothing: meaning, that persons of the greatest improbability were more heartily converted than they, whose outside seemed to have appropriated religion to the labels of their frontlets. He added a parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, who killed the servants sent to demand the fruits, and at last the son himself, that they might invade the inheritance; but made a sad commination to all such, who should either stumble at this stone, or on whom this stone should fall." After which, and some other reprehensions, which he so veiled in parable, that it might not be expounded to be calumny or declamation; although such sharp sermons had been spoken in the people's hearing, but yet so transparently, that themselves might see their own iniquity in those modest and just representments, the Pharisees would fain have seized him, but they durst not for the people, but resolved, if they could, "to entangle him in his talk;" and, therefore, "sent out spies, who should pretend" sanctity and veneration of his person, who, with a goodly insinuating preface, that "Jesus regarded no man's person, but spake the word of God," with much simplicity and justice, desired to know if it were "lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not." A question which was of great dispute, because of the numerous sect of the Galileans, who denied it, and of the affections of the people, who loved their money, and their liberty, and the privileges of their nation. And now, in all probability, he shall fall under the displeasure of the people, or of Cæsar. But Jesus called to "see a penny," and finding it to be superscribed with Cæsar's image, with incomparable wisdom he brake their snare, and established an evangelical proposition for ever, saying, "Give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

11. Having so excellently, and so much to their wonder, answered the Pharisees, the Sadducees bring their great objection to him against the resurrection, by putting the case of a woman married to seven husbands, and "whose wife should she be in the resurrection?" thinking that to be an impossible state, which engages upon such seeming incongruities, that a woman should at once be wife to seven men. But Jesus first answered their objection, telling them, that all those relations, whose foundation is in the imperfections and passions of flesh and blood, and duties here below, shall cease in that state, which is so spiritual, that it is like to the condition of angels, amongst whom there is no difference of sex, no cognations, no genealogies or derivation from one another; and then, by a new argument, proves the resurrection, by one of God's appellatives, who did then delight to be called "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" for, since "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," unto him even these men are alive; and if so, then either they now exercise acts of life, and therefore shall be restored to their bodies, that their actions may be complete, and they not remain in a state of imperfection to all eternity; or if they be alive, and yet cease from operation, they shall be much rather raised up to a condition, which shall actuate and make perfect their present capacities and dispositions, lest a power and inclination should for ever be in the root, and never rise up to fruit or herbage, and so be an eternal vanity, like an old bud or an eternal child.

12. After this, the Pharisees being well pleased, not that Jesus spake so excellently, but that the Sadducees were confuted, came to him, asking, "which was the great commandment?" and some other things, more out of curiosity than pious desires of satisfaction. But at last Jesus was pleased to ask them concerning Christ, "whose son he was?" They answered, "The Son of David:" but he replying, "How then doth David call him Lord? (The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand," &c.) they had nothing to answer. But Jesus then gave his disciples caution against the pride, the hypocrisy, and the oppression of the scribes and Pharisees: and commended the "poor widow's" oblation of her "two mites into the treasury," it being a great love in a little print, for it was "all her living." All this was spoken in the temple, the goodly stones of which when the apostles beheld with wonder, they being white and firm, twenty cubits in length, twelve in breadth,

[1] Isidor. ad Theopomp. lib. i. ep. 51.

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eight in depth, as Josephus reports,[g] Jesus prophesies the destruction of the place: concerning which prediction, when the apostles, being with him at the mount of Olives, asked him privately concerning the time and the signs of so sad event, he discoursed largely "of his coming to judgment against that city, and interweaved predictions of the universal judgment of all the world; of which this, though very sad, was but a small adumbration: adding precepts of watchfulness, and standing in preparation with hearts filled with grace, our lamps always shining, that, when the bridegroom shall come, we may be ready to enter in: which was intended in the parable of the five wise virgins:" and concluded his sermon with a narrative of his passion, foretelling that, within two days, he should be crucified.

13. Jesus descended from the mount, and came to Bethany, and, turning into the house of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalen having been reproved by Judas for spending ointment upon Jesus's feet, it being so unaccustomed and large a profusion, thought now to speak her love once more, and trouble nobody, and therefore she "poured ointment on his sacred head," believing that, being a pompousness of a more accustomed festivity, would be indulged to the expressions of her affection: but now all the disciples murmured, wondering at the prodigiousness of the woman's religion, great enough to consume a province in the overflowings of her thankfulness and duty. But Jesus now also entertained the sincerity of her miraculous love, adding this prophecy, that "where the gospel should be preached," there also a record of this act should be kept, as a perpetual monument of her piety, and an attestation of his divinity, who could foretell future contingencies; christianity receiving the greatest argument from that, which St. Peter calls "the surer word of prophecy," meaning it to be greater than the testimony of miracles, not easy to be dissembled by impure spirits, and whose efficacy should descend to all ages: for this prophecy shall for ever be fulfilling, and, being every day verified, does every day preach the divinity of Christ's person and of his institution.

14. "Two days before the passover," the scribes and Pharisees called a council, to contrive crafty ways of destroying Jesus, they not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting when Judas Iscariot had notice, (for those assemblies were public and notorious,) he ran from Bethany, and offered himself to betray his master to them, if they would give him a considerable reward. "They agreed for thirty pieces of silver." Of what value each piece was, is uncertain; but their own nation hath given a rule, that when a piece of silver is named in the pentateuch, it signifies a sicle; if it be named in the prophets, it signifies a pound; if in the other writings of the Old Testament, it signifies a talent.[h] This, therefore, being alleged out of the prophet Jeremiah by one of the evangelists,[i] it is probable the price, at which Judas sold his Lord, was thirty pound weight of silver; "a goodly price" for the Saviour of the world to be prized at by his undiscerning and unworthy countrymen.

15. The next day was "the first day of unleavened bread," on which it was necessary "they should kill the passover:" therefore "Jesus sent Peter and John to the city to a certain man," whom they should find "carrying a pitcher of water" to his house; him they should follow, and there "prepare the passover." They went, and found the man in the same circumstances, and prepared for Jesus and his family, who at the even came to celebrate the passover. It was the house of John, surnamed Mark, which had always been open to this blessed family, where he was pleased to finish his last supper and the mysteriousness of the vespers of his passion.[k]

16. When evening was come, Jesus stood with his disciples, and ate the paschal lamb; after which he "girt himself with a towel," and, taking "a basin, washed the feet of his disciples," not only by the ceremony, but in his discourses, instructing them in the doctrine of humility, which the Master, by his so great condescension to his disciples, had made sacred, and imprinted the lesson in lasting characters by making it symbolical. But Peter was unwilling to be washed by his Lord, until he was told he must renounce his part in him, unless he were washed; which option being given to Peter, he cried out, "Not my feet only, but my hands and my head." But Jesus said the ablution of the feet was sufficient for the purification of the whole man; relating to the custom of those countries, who used to go to supper immediately from the baths, who therefore were sufficiently clean, save only on their feet by reason of the dust contracted in their passage from the baths to the dining-rooms; from which when, by the hospitable master of the house, they were caused to be cleansed, they need no more ablution: and by it Jesus, passing from the letter to the spirit, meant, that the body of sin was washed in the baths of baptism; and afterwards, if we remained in the same state of purity, it was only necessary to purge away the filth contracted in our passage from the font to the altar; and then we are clean all over, when the baptismal state is unaltered, and the little adherencies of imperfection and passions are also washed off.

17. But, after the manducation of the paschal lamb, it was the custom of the nation to sit down to a second supper, in which they ate herbs and unleavened bread, the major-domo first dipping his morsel, and then the family; after which the father brake bread into pieces, and distributed a part to

[g] Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 14.

[h] Elias Levita Jud. in Tisbi. Arias Montanus in diction. Syro-Chaldaic.

[i] Matt. xxvii. 9, ubi citatur Jeremias pro Zechariâ, per errorem illapsum in codices. Nam tempore S. Augustini in nonnullis codicibus [Zacharias] legebatur; atque hodie in Syriac. T. Sed fortassis ex traditione hoc descendit à Jeremiâ dictum, sicut multa alia in Vet. Testam. non descripta, et in N. T. repetita: quod eò magis est credibile, quia proverbialiter dictum apud Judæos, spiritum Jeremiæ resedisse in Zecharia.

[k] Alexand. Mon. apud Metaphrasten die 11 Junii. Vide Adrichom. in descript. Jerus. n. 6.

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every of the guests, and first drinking himself, gave to the rest the chalice filled with wine, according to the age and dignity of the person, adding to each distribution a form of benediction proper to the mystery, which was eucharistical and commemorative of their deliverance from Egypt. This supper Jesus being to celebrate, changed the forms of benediction, turned the ceremony into mystery, and gave his body and blood in sacrament and religious configuration; so instituting the venerable sacrament, which, from the time of its institution, is called the "Lord's Supper:" which rite Jesus commanded the apostles to perpetuate in commemoration of him, their Lord, until his second coming. And this was the first delegation of a perpetual ministry, which Jesus made to his apostles, in which they were to be succeeded to in all the generations of the church.

18. But Jesus being "troubled in spirit," told his apostles, that "one of them should betray him;" which prediction he made, that they might not be scandalized at the sadness of objection of the passion, but be confirmed in their belief, seeing so great demonstration of his wisdom and spirit of prophecy. The disciples were all troubled at this sad arrest, "looking one on another, and doubting of whom he spake;" but they "beckoned to the beloved disciple, leaning on Jesus's breast, that he might ask:" for they, who knew their own innocency and infirmity, were desirous to satisfy their curiosity, and to be rid of their indetermination and their fear. But Jesus, being asked, gave them a sign, and "a sop" to Judas, commanding him to "do what he list speedily;" for Jesus was extremely "straitened," till he had drunk the chalice off, and accomplished his mysterious and afflictive baptism. After "Judas received the sop, the devil entered into him; and Judas went forth immediately, it being now night."

19. When he was gone out, Jesus began his farewell sermon, rarely mixed of sadness and joys, and studded with mysteries as with emeralds, discoursing "of the glorification of God in his Son, and of those glories which the Father had prepared for him; of his sudden departure, and his migration to a place whither they could not come yet, but afterwards they should; meaning, first to death, and then to glory: commanding them to love one another; and foretelling to Peter, (who made confident protests that he would die with his Master,) that 'before the cock should crow twice, he should deny him thrice.' But lest he should afflict them with too sad representments of his present condition, he comforts them with the comforts of faith, with the intendments of his departure 'to prepare places' in heaven 'for them,' whither they might come by him, who is 'the way, the truth, and the life;' adding a promise in order to their present support and future felicities, that, 'if they should ask of God any thing in his name, they should receive it;' and, upon condition they would love him, and keep his commandments, he would pray for the Holy Ghost to come upon them, to supply his room, to furnish them with proportionable comforts, to enable them with great gifts, to 'lead them into all truth,' and to abide with them for ever." Then arming them against future persecutions, giving them divers holy precepts, discoursing of his emanation from the Father, and of the necessity of his departure, he gave them his blessing, and prayed for them; and then, "having sung a hymn," which was part of the great Allelujah beginning at the 114th Psalm, "When Israel came out of Egypt," and ending at the 118th inclusively, "went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, unto the mount of Olives, to a village called Gethsemane, where there was a garden, into which he entered to pray together with his disciples."

20. But "taking Peter, James, and John, apart with him about a stone's cast" from the rest, "he began to be exceeding sorrowful," and sad "even unto death." For now he saw the ingredients of his bitter draught pouring into the chalice, and the sight was full of horror and amazement; he therefore "fell on his face, and prayed, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." In this prayer he fell into so sad "an agony," that the pains, inflicted by his Father's wrath, and made active by his own apprehension, were so great, that a "sweat" distilled from his sacred body as great and conglobated "as drops of blood;"[1] and God, who heard his prayer, but would not answer him in kind, sent "an angel to comfort him" in the sadness, which he was pleased not to take away. But, knowing that the drinking this cup was the great "end of his coming into the world," he laid aside all his own interests, and divested himself of the affections of flesh and blood, "willing his Father's will;" and because his Father commanded, he, in defiance of sense and passion, was desirous to suffer all our pains. But as, when two seas meet, the billows contest in ungentle embraces, and make violent noises, till, having wearied themselves into smaller waves and disunited drops, they run quietly into one stream: so did the spirit and nature of Jesus assault each other with disagreeing interests and distinguishing disputations, till the earnestness of the contention was diminished by the demonstrations of the Spirit, and the prevailings of grace, which the sooner got the victory, because they were not to contest with an unsanctified or a rebellious nature, but a body of affections which had no strong desires, but of its own preservation: and therefore "Jesus went thrice," and prayed the same prayer, that, "if it were possible, the cup might pass from him," and thrice made an act of resignation, and in the intervals "came and found his apostles asleep," gently chiding their incuriousness, and warning them to "watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation;" till the time that the traitor "came with a multitude, armed with swords and staves, from the priests and elders of the people," to apprehend him.

21. Judas gave them the opportunity of "the

[1] Quidam ex Hegesippo notant, ex irroratione sanguinis Christi natam arborem. Sic Philippus Bosquius et alii. Sed hæ sunt meræ nugæ.

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night;" that was all the advantage they had by him, because they durst not seize him by day for fear of the people; and he signified the person of his Master to the soldiers by "a kiss," and an address of seeming civility. But when they came towards him, "Jesus said, Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I am he." But there was a divinity upon him, that they could not seize him at first: but as a wave climbing of a rock is beaten back and scattered into members, till, falling down, it creeps with gentle waftings, and kisses the feet of the stony mountain, and so encircles it: so the soldiers, coming at first with a rude attempt, were twice repelled by the glory of his person, till they, falling at his feet, were at last admitted to the seizure of his body, having, by those involuntary prostrations, confessed his power greater than theirs, and that the lustre and influence of a God are greater than the violences and rudenesses of soldiers.[m] And still they, like weak eyes, durst not behold the glory of this sun, till a cloud, like a dark veil, did interrupt the emissions of his glories; they could not seize upon him, till they had thrown a veil upon his holy face: which, although it was a custom of the Easterlings, and of the Roman empire generally;[n] yet in this case was violence and necessity, because a certain impetuosity, and vigorousness of spirit, and divinity, issuing from his holy face, made them to take sanctuary in darkness, and to throw a veil over him in that dead time of a sad and dismal night. But Peter, a stout Galilean,[o] bold and zealous, attempted a rescue, and "smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear;" but Jesus rebuked the intemperance of his passion, and commanded him to "put up his sword," saying, "All they that strike with the sword shall perish with the sword;" so putting a bridle upon the illegal inflictions and expresses of anger or revenge from an incompetent authority. But "Jesus touched Malchus's ear, and cured it."

22. When Jesus had yielded himself into their power, and was now "led away by the chief priests, captains of the temple, elders of the people, and soldiers," who all came in combination and covenant to surprise him, "his disciples fled;" and John, the evangelist, who, with grief and an overrunning fancy, had forgot to lay aside his upper garment, which in festivals they are used to put on, began to make escape, but, being arrested by his linen upon his bare body, was forced to leave that behind him, that himself might escape his Master's danger: for now was verified the prophetical saying, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But Peter followed afar off;" and the greatness of John's love, when he had mastered the first inconsiderations of his fear, made him to return a while after into the high priest's hall.

23. Jesus was "first led to Annas," who was the prince of the sanhedrim, and had cognizance of prophets and public doctrines; who therefore "inquired of Jesus concerning his disciples and his discipline:" but he answered, that his doctrine had been public or popular, that he never taught in conventicles; and therefore referred him to the testimony of all the people. For which free answer, "a servant standing by smote him on the face;" and Jesus meekly asked him what evil he had done. But Annas, without the seventy assessors, could judge nothing, and therefore "sent him bound to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year," president of the rites of the temple, as the other high priest was of the great council. Thither Peter came, and had admission by the means of another disciple, supposed to be John, who, having sold his possessions in Galilee to Caiaphas, came and dwelt near mount Sion, but was, by intervention of that bargain, made "known to the high priest," and "brought Peter into the house:" where, when Peter was challenged three times by the servants to be a Galilean, and of Jesus's family, he "denied" and "forswore" it; till "Jesus, looking back," reminded him of his prediction, and the foulness of the crime, "and the cock crew;" for it was now the second cock-crowing after ten of the clock in the fourth watch. "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly," that he might cleanse his soul, washing off the foul stains he had contracted in his shameful perjury and denying of his Lord. And it is reported of the same holy person,[p] that ever after, when he heard the cock crow, he wept, remembering the old instrument of his conversion, and his own unworthiness, for which he never ceased to do actions of sorrow and sharp repentance.

24. On the morning the council was to assemble; and whilst Jesus was detained in expectation of it, the servants "mocked him," and did all actions of affront and ignoble despite to his sacred head: and because the question was, whether he were a prophet, "they covered his eyes, and smote him" in derision, calling on him to "prophesy who smote him." But "in the morning, when the high priests and rulers of the people were assembled, they sought false witness against Jesus, but found none" to purpose; they railed boldly, and could prove nothing; they accused vehemently, and the allegations were of such things as were no crimes; and the greatest article, which the united diligence of all their malice could pretend, was, that "he said he would destroy the temple, and in three days build it up again." But Jesus neither answered this, nor any other of their vainer allegations; for the witnesses destroyed each other's testimony by their disagreeing; till at last Caiaphas, who, to verify his prophecy, and to satisfy his ambition, and to bait his envy, was furiously determined Jesus should die, "adjures him by the living God to say, whether he were the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus knew his design to be an inquisition of death, not of piety or curiosity; yet, because "his hour was now come," openly affirmed it, without any expedient to elude the high priest's malice, or to decline the question.

25. When Caiaphas heard the saying, he accused Jesus of "blasphemy," and pretended an apprehension so tragical, that he over-acted his wonder, and

[m] S. Hieron. in Matt. c. 9.
[n] I, lictor, obnube caput liberatoris urbis hujus.—Liv.
[o] Ὅτα θρασύστομε Σίμων.—Nonn.
[p] Arsenius in Vitis Pp.

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feigned detestation; for "he rent his garments," (which was the interjection of the country, and custom of the nation, but forbidden to the high priest,) and called presently to sentence: and, as it was agreed beforehand, "they all condemned him as guilty of death," and, as far as they had power, inflicted it; for they "beat him with their fists, smote him with the palms of their hands, spit upon him," and abused him beyond the license of enraged tyrants. When Judas heard that they had passed the final and decretory sentence of death upon his Lord, he, who thought not it would have gone so far, "repented him" to have been the instrument of so damnable a machination, and came and "brought the silver," which they gave him for hire, "threw it in amongst them, and said, I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood." But they, incurious of those hell-torments Judas felt within him, because their own fires burnt not yet, dismissed him, and, upon consultation, bought with the money "a field to bury strangers in." And "Judas went and hanged himself:" and the judgment was made more notorious and eminent by an unusual accident at such deaths, for he so swelled, that "he burst, and his bowels gushed out." But the Greek scholiast, and some others,[q] report out of Papias, St. John's scholar, that Judas fell from the fig-tree on which he hanged, before he was quite dead, and survived his attempt some while, being so sad a spectacle of deformity, and pain, and a prodigious tumour, that his plague was deplorable, and highly miserable, till at last he burst in the very substance of his trunk, as being extended beyond the possibilities and capacities of nature.

26. But the high priests had given Jesus over to the secular power, and carried him to Pilate, to be put to death by his sentence and military power; but coming thither, they "would not enter into the judgment-hall" because of the feast; but Pilate met them, and, willing to decline the business, bade them "judge him according to their own law." They replied, "It was not lawful to put any man to death;" meaning, during the seven days of unleavened bread (as appears in the instance of Herod, who detained Peter in prison, intending, after Easter, to bring him out to the people). And their malice was restless, till the sentence they had passed were put into execution. Others thinking,[r] that all the right of inflicting capital punishments was taken from the nation by the Romans; and Josephus writes,[s] that when Ananias, their high priest, had, by a council of the Jews, condemned St. James, the brother of our Lord, and put him to death, without the consent of the Roman president, he was deprived of his priesthood. But because Pilate, who, either by common right, or at that time, was the judge of capital inflictions, was averse from intermeddling in the condemnation of an innocent person, they attempted him with excellent craft; for, knowing that Pilate was a great servant of the Roman greatness, and a hater of the sect of the Galileans, the high priest accused Jesus, that he was of that sect, that he "denied paying tribute to Cæsar," that he "called himself king." Concerning which, when Pilate interrogated Jesus, he answered, that "his kingdom was not of this world;" and Pilate, thinking he had nothing to do with the other, came forth again, and gave testimony, that "he found nothing worthy of death in Jesus." But hearing that he was "a Galilean," and of "Herod's jurisdiction, Pilate sent him to Herod, who was at Jerusalem" at the feast. "And Herod was glad, because he had heard much of him," and, since his return from Rome, "had desired to see him," but could not, by reason of his own avocations, and the ambulatory life of Christ; and now "he hoped to see a miracle done by him," of whom he had heard so many. But the event of this was, that Jesus did there no miracle; "Herod's soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him. And that day Herod was reconciled to Pilate." And "Jesus was sent back," arrayed in a white and splendid garment:[t] which though possibly it might be intended for derision, yet was a symbol of innocence, condemned persons usually being arrayed in black. And when Pilate had again examined him, "Jesus, meek as a lamb, and as a sheep before the shearers, opened not his mouth; insomuch that Pilate wondered," perceiving the greatest innocence of the man, by not offering to excuse or lessen any thing: for, though "Pilate had power to release him, or crucify him," yet his contempt of death was in just proportion to his innocence; which also Pilate concealed not, but published Jesus's innocence, by Herod's and his own sentence; to the great regret of the rulers, who, like ravening wolves, thirsted for a draught of blood, and to devour the morning prey.

27. But Pilate hoped to prevail upon the rulers, by making it a favour from them to Jesus, and an indulgence from him to the nation, to set him free: for, oftentimes, even malice itself is driven out by the devil of self-love; and, so we may be acknowledged the authors of a safety, we are content to rescue a man even from our own selves. Pilate, therefore, offered, that, according to the "custom" of the nation, Jesus should be "released" for the honour of the present festival, and as a donative to the people. But the spirit of malice was here the more prevalent, and they desired, that "Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a seditious person," should be exchanged for him. Then Pilate, casting about all ways to acquit Jesus of punishment, and himself of guilt, offered to "scourge him, and let him go," hoping that a lesser draught of blood might stop the furies and rabidness of their passion, without their bursting with a river of his best and vital liquor. But these leeches would not so let go; "they cry out, Crucify him;" and to engage him finally, they told him, "if he did let this man go, he was no friend to Cæsar."

[q] Euthym. in 26 Matt. Cedren. in Compend. Œcumen. in c. 1. Act. Juvencus Hist. Evang. lib. iv. Beda de Locis Sanct. c. 4.

[r] S. Aug. Tract. 114. in Joan. Cyrill. in Joan. lib. xii. c. 6. Chrysost. Hom. 12. in Joan. Ambros. Serm. de Calend. Januar. lib. xx.

[s] Antiq. c. 8.

[t] Joseph. lib. xvi. c. 14. Idem in Vita sua.

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28. But Pilate called for "water and washed his hands," to demonstrate his own unwillingness, and to reject and transmit the guilt upon them, who took it on them as greedily as they sucked the blood; "they cried out, His blood be on us and our children." As Pilate was going to give sentence, "his wife, being troubled in her dreams, sent," with the earnestness and passion of a woman, that he should "have nothing to do with that just person:" but he was engaged: Cæsar and Jesus, God and the king, did seem to have different interests; or, at least, he was threatened into that opinion; and Pilate, though he was satisfied it was but calumny and malice, yet he was loath to venture upon his answer at Rome, in case the high priest should have accused him. For no man knows whether the interest or the mistake of his judge may cast the sentence; and whoever is accused strongly, is never thought entirely innocent. And, therefore, not only against the Divine laws, but against the Roman too, he condemned an innocent person, upon objections notoriously malicious; he adjudged him to a death, which was only due to public thieves and homicides, (crimes with which he was not charged,) upon a pretence of blasphemy, of which he stood accused, but not convicted, and for which, by the Jewish law, he should have been stoned, if found guilty. And this he did put into present execution, against the Tiberian law, which, about twelve years before, decreed in favour of condemned persons, that, after sentence, execution should be deferred ten days.[u]

29. And now was the holy Lamb to bleed. First, therefore, Pilate's soldiers "array him in a kingly robe, put a reed in his hand" for a sceptre, "plait a crown of thorns, and put it on his head; they bow the knee, and mock him; they smite him" with his fantastic sceptre, and, instead of tribute, pay him with "blows and spittings upon his holy head:" and, when they had emptied the whole stock of poisonous contempt, "they divest him of the robes" of mockery, "and put on him his own;" they lead him to a pillar, and bind him fast, and scourge him" with whips, a punishment that slaves only did use to suffer,[x] (free persons being, in certain cases, beaten with rods and clubs,) that they might add a new scorn to his afflictions, and make his sorrows, like their own guilt, vast and mountainous. After which, Barabbas being "set free, Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified."

30. The soldiers, therefore, having framed a "cross," sad and heavy, laid it upon Jesus's shoulders, (who, like Isaac, bore the wood with which he was to be sacrificed himself,) and they drove him out to "crucifixion," who was scarce able to stand under that load. It is generally supposed that Jesus bore the whole tree, that is, both the parts of his cross; but to him that considers it, it will seem impossible; and, therefore, it is more likely, and agreeable to the old manner of crucifying malefactors, that Jesus only carried the cross part;[y] the body of it being upon the place either already fixed, or prepared for its station. Even that lesser part was grievous and intolerable to his tender, virginal, and weakened body; and when he fainted, "they compel Simon, a Cyrenian," to help him. "A great" and a mixed "multitude followed Jesus to Golgotha," the charnel house of the city, and the place of execution. But the "women wept" with bitter exclamations, and their sadness was increased by the sad prediction Jesus then made of their future misery, saying, "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; for the time shall come that men shall say, Blessed are the barren that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck; for they shall call on the hills to cover them, and on the mountains to fall upon them," that, by a sudden ruin, they may escape the lingering calamities of famine and fear, and the horror of a thousand deaths.

31. "When Jesus was come to Golgotha,"[z] a place in the mount Calvary, (where, according to the tradition of the ancients, Adam was buried,[a] and where Abraham made an altar, for the sacrifice of his son,[b]) by the piety of his disciples, and, it is probable, of those good women, which did use to minister to him, there was provided "wine mingled with myrrh," which, among the Levantines, is an excellent and pleasant mixture, and such as the piety and indulgence of the nations used to administer to condemned persons.[c] But Jesus, who, by voluntary susception, did choose to suffer our pains, refused that refreshment, which the piety of the women presented to him. The soldiers, having stripped him, nailed him to the cross with four nails,[d] and "divided his mantle into four parts," giving "to each soldier a part;" but for "his coat," because it would be spoiled if parted, "it being" weaved "without seam, they cast lots for it."

32. Now Pilate had caused "a title," containing the cause of his death, to be "superscribed" on a

[u] Sueton. in Tiberio, c. 75. Dio Rom. Hist. lib. 57.
Sub Tiberio et Druso Coss. Corruptus autem est codex Epist. Sidonii, qui ait, Nunc ex vetere S. C. Tiberiano triginta dierum vitam post sententiam trahit.

[x] Lib. in servorum, D. de pœnis. Lib. Levia, D. de Accus.

[y] Lignum transversum solùm portavit Jesus, scil. Patibulum, ad locum ubi crux, scil. lignum oblongum, terrâ defixum stetit. Sic Plautus, Patibulum ferant per urbem, et cruci affigantur. Malè ergo pictores hodierni pingunt Jesum, bajulantem utrumque lignum scil.—LIPSIUS Tract. de Supplicio Crucis.

[z] Εἰσόκε χῶρον ἵκανε φατιζομένοιο Κρανίου,
Ἀδάμ πρωτογόνοιο φιρώνυμον ἄντυγι κόρσης.
NONNUS in Joan.
Golgotha locus est capitis, Calvaria quondam,
Lingua paterna prior sic illum nomine dixit.
Hîc hominem primum suscepimus esse sepultum:
Hîc medium terræ est ——.

[a] Tertul. lib. ii. contra Marcion. Origen. Tract. 35. in Matth. Basil. in Levit. c. 5. Athan. de Pass. et Cruce, et ferè omnes Pp. unico excepto, Hieronymo, in Epist. ad Ephes. c. 5. et in c. 27 Matt.

[b] S. Aug. Serm. 71. de Tempore.

[c] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib xiv. c. 13. Athenæus, lib. xi. c. 30.
Si calidum potas, ardenti myrrha Falerno
Convenit, et melior fit sapor indè mero.
MARTIAL. lib. xiv.

[d] Ego dabo ei talentum, primus qui in crucem excurrerit: Sed eâ lege, ut affigantur bis pedes, bis brachia.—PLAUT. Mostel.

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table, " in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; the Hebrew being first, the Greek next, and the Latin nearest to the holy body; but all written after the Jewish manner, from the right hand to the left; for so the title is shown in the church of Santa Croce, in Rome, the Latin letters being to be read as if it were Hebrew; the reason of which I could never find sufficiently discovered, unless it were to make it more legible to the Jews, who, by conversing with the Romans, began to understand a little Latin. The title was, " JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS:" but the Pharisees would have it altered, and " that he said he was king of the Jews." But Pilate, out of wilfulness, or to do despite to the nation, or in honour to Jesus whom he knew to be a " just person," or being overruled by Divine providence, refused to alter it.[e] " And there were crucified with Jesus two thieves, Jesus being in the midst," according to the prophecy, " He was reckoned with the transgressors." Then Jesus prayed for his persecutors; " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But while Jesus was full of pain and charity, and was praying and dying for his enemies, " the rulers" of the Jews " mocked him," upbraiding him with the good works he did, and the expresses of his power, " saying, He saved others, himself he cannot save;" others saying, " Let him come down from the cross, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him:" and others, according as their malice was determined, by fancy and occasion, added weight and scorn to his pains; and of the two malefactors that were crucified with him, " one reviled him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." And thus far the devil prevailed, undoing himself in riddle, provoking men to do despite to Christ, and to heighten his passion out of hatred to him; and yet doing and promoting that, which was the ruin of all his own kingdom and potent mischiefs: like the Jew, who, in indignation against Mercury, threw stones at his image, and yet was by his superior judged idolatrous, that being the manner of doing honour to the idol among the gentiles.[f] But then Christ, who had, upon the cross, prayed for his enemies, and was heard of God in all that he desired, felt now the beginnings of success. For the other thief, whom the present pains and circumstances of Jesus's passion had softened and made believing, " reproved" his fellow for " not fearing God," confessed that this death happened " to them deservedly, but to Jesus causelessly:" and then prayed to Jesus, " Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Which combination of pious acts and miraculous conversion, Jesus entertained with a speedy promise of a very great felicity, promising, that upon " that very day he should be with him in paradise."

33. " Now, there were standing by the cross the mother of Jesus, and her sister, and Mary Magdalen, and John." And Jesus, being upon his deathbed, although he had no temporal estate to bestow, yet he would make provision for his mother, who being a widow, and now childless, was likely to be exposed to necessity and want; and, therefore, he did arrogate John, the beloved disciple, into Mary's kindred, making him to be her adopted son and her to be his mother, by fiction of law: " Woman, behold thy son;" and, " Man, behold thy mother. And from that time forward John took her home to his own house," which he had near mount Sion, after he had sold his inheritance in Galilee to the high priest.

34. While these things were doing, the whole frame of nature seemed to be dissolved, and out of order, while their Lord and Creator suffered. For " the sun was so darkened" that the stars appeared; and the eclipse was prodigious in the manner as well as in degree, because the moon was not then in conjunction, but full: and it was noted by Phlegon, the freed man of the emperor Hadrian, by Lucian out of the acts of the Gauls, and Dionysius, while he was yet a heathen, excellent scholars all, great historians and philosophers; who also noted the day of the week, and hour of the day, agreeing with the circumstances of the cross.[g] For the sun hid his head from beholding such a prodigy of sin and sadness, and provided a veil for the nakedness of Jesus, that the women might be present, and himself die, with modesty.

35. The eclipse and the passion began " at the sixth hour," and endured " till the ninth," about which time Jesus, being tormented with the unsufferable load of his Father's wrath, due for our sins, and wearied with pains and heaviness, " cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, as it is thought, repeated the whole two and twentieth psalm, which is an admirable narrative of the passion, full of prayer and sadness, and description of his pains at first, and of eucharist, and joy, and prophecy at the last. But these first words, which it is certain and recorded that he spake, were in a language of itself, or else, by reason of distance, not understood, for they thought he had " called for Elias," to take him down from the cross. Then Jesus, being in the agonies of a high fever, " said, I thirst. And one ran, and filled a sponge with vinegar, wrapping it with hyssop, and put it on a reed," that he might drink. The vinegar and the sponge were, in executions of condemned persons, set to stop the too violent issues of blood, and to prolong the death;[h] but were exhibited to him in scorn, " mingled with gall," to make the mixture more horrid and ungentle. But " Jesus tasted it" only, and " refused the draught." And now, knowing that the prophecies were fulfilled, his Father's wrath appeased, and his torments satisfactory, he

[e] Proconsulis tabella sententia est, quæ semel lecta, neque augeri literâ unâ, neque minui potest: sed utcunque recitata, ita provinciæ instrumento refertur.—APUL. Flor. lib. i.

[f] R. Manasses. Vide Dionys. Vossium in Annot. ad Rab. R. Maimon.

[g] Origen. cont. Cels. lib. ii. Tertul. Apolog. Lucian in actis sui Mart. August. Ep. 80 ad Hesychium. Suidas in Vitâ Dionys. ait eum dixisse, Aut Deus patitur, aut patienti compatitur: et hac de causâ Athenienses erexisse aram ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ aiunt quidam.

[h] Veteres spongiæ conglutinant vulnera.—PLIN. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxi. c. 11.

Poterit et de misericordiâ moveri defixus in morsus uncorum, et spongias retiariorum.—TERTUL. de Spect. c. 25.

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said, "It is finished, and crying with a loud voice, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit, he bowed his head, and yielded up his spirit" into the hands of God, and died, hastening to his Father's glories. Thus did this glorious Sun set in a sad and clouded west, running speedily to shine in the other world.

36. Then "was the veil of the temple," which separated the secret Mosaic rites from the eyes of the people, "rent in the midst, from the top to the bottom; and the angels, presidents of the temple, called to each other to depart from their seats;[i] and so great "an earthquake" happened, that "the rocks did rend," the mountains trembled, "the graves opened, and the bodies of dead persons arose, walking," from their cemeteries, "to the holy city, and appeared unto many:" and so great apprehensions and amazements happened to them all that stood by, that they "departed, smiting their breasts with sorrow and fear:" and "the centurion," that ministered at the execution, "said, Certainly this was the Son of God;" and he became a disciple, renouncing his military employment, and died a martyr.[k]

37. But because the next day was the "Jews' sabbath," and a paschal festival besides, the Jews hastened that the bodies should be taken from the cross; and, therefore, sent to Pilate to hasten their death by "breaking their legs,[l] that," before sunset,[m] "they might be taken away," according to the commandment, and "be buried. The soldiers, therefore, came, and brake the legs of the two thieves; but espying," and wondering, "that Jesus was already dead, they brake not his legs; for the scripture foretold, that a bone of him should not be broken: but a soldier, with his lance, pierced his side, and immediately there streamed out" two rivulets of "water and blood." But the holy Virgin-mother, (whose soul, during this whole passion, "was pierced with a sword," and sharper sorrows, though she was supported by the comforts of faith, and those holy predictions of his resurrection and future glories, which Mary had laid up in store, against this great day of expense,) now that she saw her holy Son had suffered all that our necessities, and their malice, could require or inflict, caused certain ministers, with whom she joined, to take her dead Son from the cross; whose body when she once got free from the nails, she kissed, and embraced with entertainments of the nearest vicinity, that could be expressed by a person that was holy and sad, and a mother weeping for her dead Son.

38. But she was highly satisfied with her own meditations, that now that great mystery, determined, by Divine predestination, before the beginning of all ages, was fulfilled in her Son; and the passion, that must needs be, was accomplished:[n] she, therefore, first bathes his cold body with her warm tears, and makes clean the surface of the wounds, and, delivering a winding napkin to Joseph of Arimathæa, gave to him in charge to enwrap the body, and embalm it, to compose it to the grave, and to do it all the rites of funeral, having first exhorted him to a public confession of what he was privately, till now: and he obeyed the counsel of so excellent a person, and ventured upon the displeasure of the Jewish rulers, and "went confidently to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." And "Pilate gave him" the power of it.

39. "Joseph, therefore, takes the body, binds his face with a napkin," washes the body, anoints it with ointment, enwraps it in a composition of "myrrh and aloes, and puts it into a new tomb, which he, for himself, had hewn out of a rock" (it not being lawful, among the Jews, to inter a condemned person in the common cemeteries): for all these circumstances were in "the Jews' manner of burying." But when the sun was set, "the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, telling him that Jesus, whilst he was living, foretold his own resurrection upon the third day: and, lest his disciples should come and steal the body, and say he was risen from the dead, desired that "the sepulchre might be secured" against the danger of any such imposture. Pilate gave them leave to do their pleasure, even to the satisfaction of their smallest scruples. They, therefore, "sealed the grave, rolled a great stone at the mouth of it," and, as an ancient tradition says,[o] bound it about with labels of iron, and "set a watch" of soldiers, as if they had intended to have made it surer than the decrees of fate, or the never-failing laws of nature.

Ad SECTION XV.

Considerations of some preparatory Accidents before the Entrance of Jesus into his Passion.

1. HE that hath observed the story of the life of Jesus, cannot but see it, all the way, to be strewed with thorns and sharp-pointed stones; and although by the kisses of his feet they became precious and salutary, yet they procured to him sorrow and disease: it was "meat and drink to him to do his Father's will," but it was "bread of affliction, and rivers of tears to drink;" and for these he thirsted like the earth after the cool stream. For so great was his perfection, so exact the conformity of his will, so absolute the subordination of his inferior faculties to the infinite love of God, which sat regent in the court of his will and understanding, that, in this election of accidents, he never considered the taste but the goodness, never distinguished sweet from bitter, but duty and piety always prepared his table. And, therefore, now knowing that his time, determined by the Father, was nigh, he hastened

[i] S. Hieron. Ep. 150. q. 8.
[k] Apud Metaph. die 16 Octob.
[l] In hac ipsâ genuum commissurâ quædam buccarum inanitas est, quâ perfossâ, ceu jugulo, spiritus aufugit.—PLIN. lib. xi. c. 45.

Vide Lactant. lib. i. c. 26. Cic. pro Rosc.
[m] Philo de Leg. Special. Deut. xxi.
[n] Metaphr. August. 15.
[o] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 2. Niceph. lib. i. c. 32.

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up to Jerusalem; "he went before" his disciples, saith St. Mark, "and they followed him trembling and amazed;" and yet, before that, even then when his brethren observed he had a design of publication of himself, he suffered them "to go before him, and went up, as it were, in secret." For so we are invited to martyrdom, and suffering in a christian cause, by so great an example: the holy Jesus is gone before us, and it were a holy contention, to strive whose zeal were forwardest in the designs of humiliation and self-denial; but it were also well, if, in doing ourselves secular advantage, and promoting our worldly interest, we should follow him, who was ever more distant from receiving honours than from receiving a painful death. Those affections, which dwell in sadness, and are married to grief, and lie at the foot of the cross, and trace the sad steps of Jesus, have the wisdom of recollection, the tempers of sobriety, and are the best imitations of Jesus, and securities against the levity of a dispersed and a vain spirit. This was intimated by many of the disciples of Jesus, in the days of the Spirit, and, when they had "tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" for then we find many ambitious of martyrdom, and that have laid stratagems and designs, by unusual deaths, to get a crown. The soul of St. Lawrence was so scorched with ardent desires of dying for his Lord, that he accounted the coals of his gridiron but as a julep, or the aspersion of cold water, to refresh his soul; they were chill as the Alpine snows, in respect of the heats of his diviner flames. And if these lesser stars shine so brightly, and burn so warmly, what heat of love may we suppose to have been in the Sun of righteousness? If they went fast toward the crown of martyrdom, yet we know that the holy Jesus went before them all: no wonder that "he cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."

2. When the disciples had overtaken Jesus, he begins to them a sad homily upon the old text of suffering, which he had, well nigh for a year together, preached upon; but because it was an unpleasing lesson, so contradictory to those interests, upon the hopes of which they had entertained themselves, and spent all their desires, they could by no means understand it: for an understanding, prepossessed with a fancy, or an unhandsome principle, construes all other notions to the sense of the first: and whatsoever contradicts it, we think it an objection, and that we are bound to answer it. But now that it concerned Christ to speak so plainly, that his disciples, by what was to happen within five or six days, might not be scandalized, or believe it happened to Jesus without his knowledge and voluntary entertainment, he tells them of his sufferings, to be accomplished in this journey to Jerusalem. And here the disciples showed themselves to be but men, full of passion and indiscreet affection; and the bold Galilean, St. Peter, took the boldness to dehort his Master from so great an infelicity; and met with a reprehension so great, that neither the scribes, nor the Pharisees, nor Herod himself, ever met with its parallel: Jesus called him Satan; meaning, that no greater contradictions can be offered to the designs of God and his holy Son, than to dissuade us from suffering. And if we understood how great are the advantages of a suffering condition, we should think all our daggers gilt, and our pavements strewed with roses, and our halters silken, and the rack an instrument of pleasure, and be most impatient of those temptations which seduce us into ease, and divorce us from the cross, as being opposite to our greatest hopes and most perfect desires. But still this humour of St. Peter's imperfection abides amongst us: he that breaks off the yoke of obedience, and unties the bands of discipline, and preaches a cheap religion, and presents heaven in the midst of flowers, and strews carpets softer than the Asian luxury in the way, and sets the songs of Sion to the tunes of Persian and lighter airs, and offers great liberty of living, and bondage under affection and sins, and reconciles eternity with the present enjoyment, he shall have his schools filled with disciples; but he that preaches the cross and the severities of christianity, and the strictnesses of a holy life, shall have the lot of his blessed Lord; he shall be thought ill of, and deserted.

3. Our blessed Lord, five days before his passion, sent his disciples to a village to borrow an ass, that he might ride in triumph to Jerusalem; he had none of his own; but yet he, who was so dear to God, could not want what was to supply his needs. It may be, God hath laid up our portion in the repositories of other men, and means to furnish us from their tables, to feed us from their granaries, and that their wardrobe shall clothe us; for it is all one to him to make a fish bring us money, or a crow to bring us meat, or the stable of our neighbour to furnish our needs of beasts. If he brings it to thy need as thou wantest it, thou hast all the good in the use of the creature which the owners can receive; and the horse which is lent me in charity does me as much ease, and the bread which is given me in alms feeds me as well, as the other part of it, which the good man, that gave me a portion, reserved for his own eating, could do to him. And if we would give God leave to make provisions for us in the ways of his own choosing, and not estimate our wants by our manner of receiving, being contented that God, by any of his own ways, will minister it to us, we should find our cares eased, and our content increased, and our thankfulness engaged, and all our moderate desires contented, by the satisfaction of our needs. For if God is pleased to feed me by my neighbour's charity, there is no other difference, but that God makes me an occasion of his ghostly good, as he is made the occasion of my temporal; and if we think it disparagement, we may remember, that God conveys more good to him by me, than to me by him: and it is a proud impatience to refuse or to be angry with God's provisions, because he hath not observed my circumstances and ceremonies of election.

4. And now begins that great triumph, in which the holy Jesus was pleased to exalt his office, and to abase his person. He rode, like a poor man,

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upon an ass, a beast of burden and the lowest value, and yet it was not his own; and in that equipage he received the acclamations due to a mighty prince, to the Son of the eternal King; telling us, that the smallness of fortune, and the rudeness of exterior habiliments, and a rough wall, are sometimes the outsides of a great glory; and that when God means to glorify or do honour to a person, he needs no help from secular advantages. He hides great riches in renunciation of the world, and makes great honour break forth from the clouds of humility; and victory to arise from yielding, and the modesty of departing from our interest; and peace to be the reward of him that suffers all the hostilities of men and devils. For Jesus, in this great humility of his, gives a great probation that he was the Messias, and the King of Sion; because no other king entered into those gates riding upon an ass, and received the honour of "Hosannah," in that unlikelihood and contradiction of unequal circumstances.

5. The blessed Jesus had never but two days of triumph in his life; the one was on his transfiguration upon mount Tabor; the other, this his riding into the holy city. But, that it may appear how little were his joys and present exterior complacencies; in the day of his transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared to him, telling him what great things he was to suffer; and in this day of his riding to Jerusalem, he wet the palms with a dew sweeter than the moistures upon mount Hermon, or the drops of manna; for, to allay the little warmth of a springing joy he let down a shower of tears, weeping over undone Jerusalem in the day of his triumph, leaving it disputable whether he felt more joy or sorrow in the acts of love; for he triumphed to consider that the redemption of the world was so near, and wept bitterly that men would not be redeemed; his joy was great, to consider that himself was to suffer so great sadness for our good; and his sorrow was very great, to consider that we would not entertain that good, that he brought and laid before us by his passion. He was in figure, as his servant, St. Paphnutius, was afterwards in letter and true story, "crucified upon palms:" which, indeed, was the emblem of a victory;[a] but yet such as had leaves sharp, poignant, and vexatious. However, he entered into Jerusalem dressed in gaieties, which yet he placed under his feet; but with such pomps and solemnities, each family, according to its proportion, was accustomed to bring the paschal lamb to be slain for the passover; and it was not an indecent ceremony, that "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world" should be brought to his slaughter with the acknowledgments of a religious solemnity; because now that real good was to be exhibited to the world, which those little paschal lambs did but signify and represent in shadow: and that was the true cause of all the little joy he had.

6. And if we consider what followed, it might seem also to be a design to heighten the dolorousness of his passion; for to descend from the greatest of worldly honours, from the adoration of a God, and the acclamations to a king, to the death of a slave, and the torments of a cross, and the dishonours of a condemned criminal, were so great stoopings and vast changes, that they gave height, and sense, and excellency to each other. This, then, seemed an excellent glory: but, indeed, was but an art and instrument of grief; for such is the nature of all our felicities, they end in sadness, and increase the sting of sorrows, and add monsters to them, and cause impatience and uncomfortable remembrances; but the griefs of a christian, when they be instances of repentance, or parts of persecution, or exercises of patience, end in joy and endless comfort. Thus, Jesus, like a rainbow, that made of the glories of light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; half triumph, and half sorrow; entered into that town where he had done much good to others, and to himself received nothing but affronts; yet his tenderness increased upon him; and that very journey, which was Christ's last solemn visit for their recovery, he doubled all the instruments of his mercy and their conversion. He rode in triumph; the children sang hosannah to him; he cured many diseased persons; he wept for them, and pitied them, and sighed out the intimations of a prayer, and did penance for their ingratitude, and staid all day there, looking about him towards evening; and no man would invite him home, but he was forced to go to Bethany, where he was sure of a hospitable entertainment. I think no christian that reads this, but will be full of indignation at the whole city; who, for malice or for fear, would not, or durst not, receive their Saviour into their houses; and yet we do worse; for now that he is become our Lord, with mightier demonstrations of his eternal power, we suffer him to look round about upon us for months and years together, and possibly never entertain him, till our house is ready to rush upon our heads, and we are going to unusual and stranger habitations. And yet, in the midst of a populous and mutinous city, this great King had some good subjects; persons that threw away their own garments, and laid them at the feet of our Lord; that being divested of their own, they might be re-invested with a robe of his righteousness, wearing that till it were changed into a stole of glory; the very ceremony of their reception of the Lord became symbolical to them, and expressive of all our duties.

7. But I consider that the blessed Jesus had affections no less than infinite, towards all mankind; and he who wept upon Jerusalem, who had done so great despite to him, and within five days were to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and do an act, which all ages of the world could never repeat in the same instance, did also, in the number of his tears, reckon our sins, as sad considerations and incentives of his sorrow. And it would well become us to consider what great evil we do, when our actions are such as for which our blessed Lord did weep. He who was seated in the bosom of felicity, yet he moistened his fresh laurels upon the day of his triumph with tears of love and bitter allay. His

[a] Palma est victorum, palmæ tu affixus es; ergò Lætus obi, quoniam non nisi victor obis.

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y of triumph was a day of sorrow; and if we uld weep for our sins, that instance of sorrow uld be a day of triumph and jubilee.

8. From hence the holy Jesus went to Bethany, ere he had another manner of reception than at e holy city. There he supped; for his goodly y of triumph had been with him a fasting-day. id Mary Magdalen, who had spent one box of rd pistic upon our Lord's feet, as a sacrifice of charist for her conversion, now bestowed another, thankfulness for the restitution of her brother azarus to life, and consigned her Lord unto his rial. And here she met with an evil interpreter. idas, an apostle, one of the Lord's own family, etended it had been a better religion to have given to the poor; but it was malice, and the spirit ther of envy or avarice in him that passed that ntence; for he that sees a pious action well done, id seeks to undervalue it by telling how it might ve been better, reproves nothing but his own irit. For a man may do very well, and God would cept it; though to say he might have done better, to say only, that action was not the most perfect id absolute in its kind: but to be angry at a religious person, and without any other pretence but at he might have done better, is spiritual envy; r a pious person would have nourished up that fant action by love and praise, till it had grown the most perfect and intelligent piety. But the ent of that man gave the interpretation of his esent purpose; and at the best it could be no her than a rash judgment of the action and intention of a religious, thankful, and holy person. ut she found her Lord, who was her beneficiary in is, become her patron and her advocate. And ereafter, when we shall find the devil, the great cuser of God's saints, object against the piety and ligion of holy persons; a cup of cold water shall e accepted unto reward, and a good intention eightened to the value of an exterior expression, id a piece of gum to the quality of a holocaust; id an action, done with great zeal and an intense ve, be acquitted from all its adherent imperfections; hrist receiving them into himself, and being like ie altar of incense, hallowing the very smoke, and using it into a flame, and entertaining it into ie embraces of the firmament and the bosom of eaven. Christ himself, who is the judge of our ctions, is also the entertainer and object of our harity and duty, and the advocate of our persons.

9. Judas, who declaimed against the woman, ade tacit reflections upon his Lord for suffering it: nd, indeed, every obloquy against any of Christ's ervants, is looked on as an arrow shot into the eart of Christ himself. And now, a persecution eing begun against the Lord within his own amily, another was raised against him from without. 'or the chief priests "took crafty counsel against esus," and called a consistory, to contrive "how hey might destroy him:" and here was the greatest epresentment of the goodness of God and the ingratitude of man, that could be practised or understood. How often had Jesus poured forth tears for hem! How many sleepless nights had he awaked, to do them advantage! How many days had he spent in homilies, and admirable visitations of mercy and charity; in casting out devils, in curing their sick, in correcting their delinquencies, in reducing them to the ways of security and peace; and, that we may use the greatest expression in the world, that is, his own, "in gathering them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," to give them strength, and warmth, and life, and ghostly nourishment! And the chief priests, together with their faction, use all arts, and watch all opportunities to get Christ; not that they might possess him, but to destroy him; little considering that they extinguish their own eyes, and destroy that spring of life, which was intended to them for a blissful immortality.

10. And here it was that the devil showed his promptness, to furnish every evil-intended person with apt instruments, to act the very worst of his intentions. The devil knew their purposes, and the aptness and proclivity of Judas; and, by bringing these together, he served their present design, and his own great intendment. The devil never fails to promote every evil purpose; and, except where God's restraining grace does intervene and interrupt the opportunity, by interposition of different and cross accidents to serve other ends of Providence, no man easily is fond of wickedness, but he shall receive enough to ruin him. Indeed, Nero and Julian, both witty men and powerful, desired to have been magicians, and could not: and although, possibly, the devil would have corresponded with them, who yet were already his own, in all degrees of security; yet God permitted not that, lest they might have understood new ways of doing despite to martyrs and afflicted christians. And it concerns us not to tempt God, or invite a forward enemy; for as we are sure the devil is ready to promote all vicious desires, and bring them out to execution; so we are not sure, that God will not permit him: and he that desires to be undone, and cares not to be prevented by God's restraining grace, shall find his ruin in the folly of his own desires, and become wretched by his own election. Judas, hearing of this congregation of the priests, went and offered to betray his Lord, and made a covenant, the price of which was "thirty pieces of silver;" and he returned.

11. It is not intimated in the history of the life of Jesus, that Judas had any malice against the person of Christ; for when, afterwards, he saw the matter was to end in the death of his Lord, he repented: but a base and unworthy spirit of covetousness possessed him; and the relics of indignation, for missing the price of the ointment which the holy Magdalen had poured upon His feet, burnt in his bowels, with a secret, dark, melancholic fire, and made an eruption into an act, which all ages of the world could never parallel. They appointed him for hire thirty pieces, and some say, that every piece did in value equal ten ordinary current deniers; and so Judas was satisfied, by receiving the worth of the three hundred pence, at which he valued the nard pistic. But hereafter, let no christian be ashamed to be despised and undervalued; for he will hardly meet so great reproach, as to have so

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disproportioned a price set upon his life, as was upon the holy Jesus. St. Mary Magdalen thought it not good enough to anneal his sacred feet; Judas thought it a sufficient price for his head: for covetousness aims at base and low purchases, whilst holy love is great and comprehensive as the bosom of heaven, and aims at nothing that is less than infinite. The love of God is a holy fountain, limpid and pure, sweet and salutary, lasting and eternal: the love of money is a vertiginous pool, sucking all into it to destroy it; it is troubled and uneven, giddy and unsafe, serving no end but its own, and that, also, in a restless and uneasy motion. The love of God spends itself upon him, to receive again the reflections of grace and benediction: the love of money spends all its desires upon itself, to purchase nothing but unsatisfying instruments of exchange, or supernumerary provisions, and ends in dissatisfaction, and emptiness of spirit, and a bitter curse. St. Mary Magdalen was defended by her Lord against calumny, and rewarded with an honourable mention to all ages of the church: besides the "unction from above," which she shortly after received, to consign her to crowns and sceptres: but Judas was described in the Scripture, the book of life, with the black character of death; he was disgraced to eternal ages, and presently after acted his own tragedy with a sad and ignoble death.

12. Now, all things being fitted, our blessed Lord sends two disciples to prepare the passover, that he might fulfil the law of Moses, and pass from thence to institutions evangelical, and then fulfil his sufferings. Christ gave them a sign to guide them to the house, "a man bearing a pitcher of water:" by which some, that delight in mystical significations, say was typified the sacrament of baptism: meaning, that although, by occasion of the paschal solemnity, the holy eucharist was first instituted, yet it was afterwards to be applied to practice according to the sense of this accident: only baptized persons were apt suscipients of the other more perfective rite, as the taking nutriment supposes persons born into the world, and within the common conditions of human nature. But, in the letter, it was an instance of the Divine omniscience, who could pronounce concerning accidents at distance, as if they were present: and yet also, like the provision of the colt to ride on, it was an instance of Providence, and security of all God's sons for their portion of temporals. Jesus had not a lamb of his own, and possibly no money in the bags to buy one: and yet Providence was his guide, and the charity of a good man was his *proveditore*, and he found excellent conveniences in the entertainments of a hospitable good man, as if he had dwelt in Ahab's ivory house, and had had the riches of Solomon, and the meat of his household.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus, who, with great humility and infinite love, didst enter into the holy city, riding upon an ass, that thou mightest verify the predictions of the prophets, and give example of meekness, and of the gentle and paternal government which the eternal Father laid upon thy shoulders; be pleased, dearest Lord, to enter into my soul with triumph, trampling over all thine enemies: and give me grace to entertain thee with joy and adoration, with abjection of my own desires, with lopping off all my superfluous branches of a temporal condition, and spending them in the offices of charity and religion, and divesting myself of all my desires, laying them at thy holy feet, that I may bear the yoke and burden of the Lord with alacrity, with love, and the wonders of a satisfied and triumphant spirit. Lord, enter in, and take possession; and thou, to whose honour the very stones would give testimony, make my stony heart an instrument of thy praises; let me strew thy way with flowers of virtue, and the holy rosary of christian graces: and, by thy aid and example, let us also triumph over all our infirmities and hostilities, and then lay our victories at thy feet, and at last follow thee into thy heavenly Jerusalem with palms in our hands, and joy in our hearts, and eternal acclamations on our lips, rejoicing in thee, and singing hallelujahs in a happy eternity to thee, O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus. Amen.

II.

O blessed and dear Lord, who wert pleased to permit thyself to be sold to the assemblies of evil persons for a vile price by one of thy own servants, for whom thou hadst done so great favours, and hadst designed a crown and a throne to him, and he turned himself into a sooty coal, and entered into the portion of evil angels; teach us to value thee above all the joys of men, to prize thee at an estimate beyond all the wealth of nature, to buy wisdom, and not to sell it, to part with all, that we may enjoy thee: and let no temptation abuse our understandings, no loss vex us into impatience, no frustration of hope fill us with indignation, no pressure of calamitous accidents make us angry at thee, the fountain of love and blessing, no covetousness transport us into the suburbs of hell, and the regions of sin; but make us to love thee as well as ever any creature loved thee, that we may never burn in any fires but of a holy love, nor sink in any inundation but what proceeds from penitential showers, and suffer no violence but of implacable desires to live with thee, and, when thou callest us, to suffer with thee, and for thee.

III.

Lord, let me never be betrayed by myself, or any violent accident and importunate temptation; let me never be sold for the vile price of temporal gain, or transient pleasure, or a pleasant dream; but, since thou hast bought me with a price, even then when thou wert sold thyself, let me never be separated from thy possession. I am thine,

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bought with a price; Lord, save me; and in the day when thou bindest up thy jewels, remember, Lord, that I cost thee as dear as any, and therefore cast me not into the portion of Judas; but let me walk, and dwell, and bathe in the field of thy blood, and pass from hence, pure and sanctified, into the society of the elect apostles, receiving my part with them, and my lot in the communications of thy inheritance, O gracious Lord and dearest Saviour, Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Washing of the Disciples' Feet by Jesus, and his Sermon of Humility.[a]

1. THE holy Jesus went now to eat his last paschal supper, and to finish the work of his legation, and to fulfil that part of the law of Moses in every of its smallest and most minute particularities, in which also the actions were significant of spiritual duties: which we may transfer from the letter to the spirit in our own instances, that as Jesus ate the paschal lamb with a staff in his hand, with his loins girt, with sandals on his feet, in great haste, with unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs: so we also should do all our services according to the signification of these symbols, leaning upon the cross of Jesus for a staff, and bearing the rod of his government, with loins girt with angelical chastity, with shoes on our feet, that so we may guard and have custody over our affections, and "be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," eating in haste, as becomes persons "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," doing the work of the Lord zealously and fervently, without the leaven of malice and secular interest, with bitter herbs of self-denial and mortification of our sensual and inordinate desires. The sense and mystery of the whole act, with all its circumstances, is, That we obey all the sanctions of the Divine law, and that every part of our religion be pure and peaceable, chaste and obedient, confident in God and diffident in ourselves, frequent and zealous, humble and resigned, just and charitable; and there will not easily be wanting any just circumstance to hallow and consecrate the action.

2. When the holy Jesus had finished his last Mosaic rite, he descends to give example of the first fruit of evangelical graces; "he rises from supper, lays aside his garment" like a servant, and, with all the circumstances of an humble ministry, "washes the feet of his disciples,"[b] beginning at the first, St. Peter, until he came to Judas, the traitor; that we might, in one scheme, see a rare conjunction of charity and humility, of self-denial and indifferency, represented by a person glorious and great, their Lord and Master, sad and troubled. And he chose to wash their feet[c] rather than their head, that he might have the opportunity of a more humble posture, and a more apt signification of his charity. Thus God lays every thing aside, that he may serve his servants: heaven stoops to earth, and one abyss calls upon another, and the miseries of man, which were next to infinite, are excelled by a mercy equal to the immensity of God. And this washing of their feet, which was an accustomed civility and entertainment of honoured strangers at the beginning of their meal, Christ deferred to the end of the paschal supper, that it might be the preparatory to the second, which he intended should be festival to all the world. St. Peter was troubled that the hands of his Lord should wash his servants' feet, those hands which had opened the eyes of the blind, and cured lepers, and healed all diseases, and, when lift up to heaven, were omnipotent, and could restore life to dead and buried persons; he counted it a great indecency for him to suffer it; but it was no more than was necessary, for they had but lately been earnest in dispute for precedency; and it was of itself so apt to swell into tumour and inconvenience, that it was not to be cured but by some prodigy of example and miracle of humility, which the holy Jesus offered to them in this express, calling them to learn some great lesson; a lesson which God descended from heaven to earth, from riches to poverty, from essential innocence to the disreputation of a sinner, from a master to a servant, to learn us, that is, that we should esteem ourselves but just as we are, low, sinful, miserable, needy, and unworthy. It seems it is a great thing that man should come to have just and equal thoughts of himself, that God used such powerful arts to transmit this lesson, and engrave it in the spirits of men; and if the receipt fails, we are eternally lost in the mists of vanity, and enter into the condition of those angels, whom pride transformed and spoiled into the condition of devils; and upon consideration of this great example, Guericus, a good man, cried out, "Thou hast overcome, O Lord, thou hast overcome my pride; this example hath mastered me; I deliver myself up into thy hands, never to receive liberty or exaltation but in the condition of thy humblest servant."[d]

3. And to this purpose St. Bernard hath an affectionate and devout consideration, saying, "That some of the angels, as soon as they were created, had an ambition to become like God, and to aspire into the throne which God had appointed to the holy Jesus in eternal ages. When God created man, presently the devil rubbed his leprosy upon him, and he would needs be like God too, and Satan promised him that he should. As the evil angels would have been like to God in power and majesty, so man would have been like him in knowledge, and have imitated the wisdom of the eternal Father. But man had the fate of Gehazi; he would needs have the talent and garments of Lucifer, and he had also his plague; he lost paradise for his pride. And now, what might befit the Son of God to do, seeing man so lost, and God so zealous of his honour? I see (saith he) that, by occasion of me, the Father loses his creatures, for they have all aspired to be

[a] Ad Num. 16.

[b] Λοίσθιον ἐκ πρώτου μετανεύμενος ἄλλον ἀπ' ἄλλου,
Ἀρχόμενος Σίμωνος, ἕως ἰδίοιο φονῆος.—NONN.

[c] Idcirco pedes potiùs quàm manus et caput: quia in lavandis pedibus, et affectuosior est gestus humilitatis, et propinquior significatio charitatis, quâ nos lavat sanguine suo à peccatis nostris.—RUPERT.

[d] Quomodo non humiliabitur homo sub tam humili Deo? —S. BERNARD.

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like me, and are fallen into the greatest infelicities. Behold, I will go towards man in such a form, that whosoever from henceforth would become like me, shall be so, and be a gainer by it. And for this cause the Son of God came from heaven, and made himself a poor humble person, and by all the actions of his life commented upon the present discourse: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart.'"[e] Blessed be that mercy and bounty which moved Almighty God to condescend to that so great appetite we had of being like him; for now we may be like unto God, but it must be by humility, of which he hath given us an example powerful as miracles, and great as our own pride and misery.

4. And, indeed, our blessed Lord, knowing that examples are like maps and perfect schemes, in which the whole continent may at once be represented to the eye to all the purposes of art and benefit, did, in the latter end of his life, draw up the dispersions and larger harvest of his precepts, binding them in the bundle of great examples, and casting them into actions as into sums total: for so this act of washing the feet of his own ministers, and then dying for them, and for all his enemies, did preach the three great sums of evangelical perfection with an admirable energy and abbreviature; humility, and charity, and sufferings, being to christianity as the body, and the soul, and the spirit, are to the whole man. For no man brings a sad funeral into the theatre to make his spectators merry, nor can well preach chastity in the impurity of the bordelli, or persuade temperance when himself is full of wine and luxury,[f] and enters into the baths to boil his undigested meat, that he may return to his second supper, and breathes forth impure belchings together with his homily: a poor eremite, or a severely-living philosopher, into whose life his own precepts have descended, and his doctrine is mingled with his soul, mingles also effect and virtue with homilies, and incorporates his doctrine in the hearts of his disciples. And this the holy Jesus did in his own person, bearing the burden first upon his own shoulders, that we may, with better alacrity, undergo what our blessed Lord bears with us, and for us. But that we may the better understand what our blessed Lord designed to us in this lecture, let us consider the proper acts of humility which integrate the virtue.

5. The first is, "Christ's humble man thinks meanly of himself:" and there is great reason every man should. For his body is but rottenness and infirmity covered with a fair mantle, a dunghill overcast with snow: and if we consider sadly, that from trees and plants come oil, balsam, wine, spices, and aromatic odours, and that from the sinks of our body no such sweet or salutary emanations are observed, we may at least think it unreasonable to boast our beauty, which is nothing but a clear and well-coloured skin, which every thing in the world can spoil; or our strength, which an ague tames into the infirmities of a child, and in which we are excelled by a bull; or any thing of our body, which is nothing but an unruly servant of the soul, marked with characters of want and dependence, and begging help from all the elements, and, upon a little disturbance, growing troublesome to itself by its own impurities. And yet there is no reason in respect of the soul for any man to exalt himself above his brother; because all reasonable souls are equal; and that one is wise, and another is foolish or less learned, is by accident and extrinsic causes: God at first makes all alike; but an indisposed body, or an inopportune education, or evil customs, superinduce variety and difference. And if God discerns a man from his brother by distinction of gifts, it alters not the case; still the man hath nothing of himself that can call him excellent: it is as if a wall, upon which the sun reflects, should boast itself against another that stands in the shadow. Greater glory is to be paid to God for the discerning gifts; but to take any of it to ourselves, and rise higher than our brother, or advance our own opinion, is as if a man should be proud of being in debt, and think it the greater excellency that he is charged with heavier and more severe accounts.

6. This act consists not in declamations and forms of satire[g] against ourselves, saying, I am a miserable, sinful creature; I am proud, or covetous, or ignorant; for many men say so, that are not willing to be thought so. Neither is humility a virtue made up of wearing old clothes, or doing servile and mean employments by voluntary undertaking, or of sullen gestures, or demiss behaviour, and artifice of lowly expressions: for these may become snares to invite and catch at honour; and then they are collateral designs of pride, and direct actions of hypocrisy. But it consists in a true understanding of our own condition, and a separating our own nothing from the good we have received, and giving to God all the glory, taking to ourselves all the shame and dishonour due to our sinful condition. He that thinks himself truly miserable and vilified by sin, hates it perfectly; and he that knows himself to be nothing, cannot be exalted in himself: and whatsoever is besides these two extremes of a natural nothing and a superadded sin, must be those good things we have received, which, because they derive from God, must make all their returns thither. But this act is of greater difficulty in persons pious, full of gifts, and eminent in graces, who, being fellow-workers together with God, sometimes grow tacitly, and without notice, given to confide in themselves, and with some freer fancy ascribe too much of the good action to their own choice and diligence, and take up their crowns, which lie at the foot of the throne, and set them upon their own heads. For a sinner to desire to be esteemed a sinner, is no more humility, than it is for the son of a ploughman to confess his father; but, indeed, it is hard for a man to be cried up for a saint, to

[e] Matt. xi. 29.

[f] Turgidus hic epulis, atque albo ventre lavatur,
Gutture sulphureas lentè exhalante Mephites.
PERS. Sat. 3.

[g] Auferantur omnia figmenta verborum, cessent simulati gestus verum humilem patientia ostendit.—S. HIER.

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lk upon the spire of glory, and to have no adrence or impure mixtures of vanity grow upon the tside of his heart. All men have not such heads to walk in great heights, without giddiness and settled eyes: Lucifer, and many angels, walking on the battlements of heaven, grew top-heavy, and l into the state of devils; and the father of the ristian eremites, St. Antony,[h] was frequently atnpted by the devil, and solicited to vanity, the vil usually making fantastic noises to be heard fore him, "Make room for the saint and servant God;" but the good man knew Christ's voice to a low base of humility, and that it was the noise hell that invited to complacencies and vanity; d therefore took the example of the apostles, who, the midst of the greatest reputation and spiritual vancements, were dead unto the world, and seemed live in a state of separation. For, the true stating r own question, and knowing ourselves, must eds represent us set in the midst of infinite imrfections, laden with sins, choked with the noises a polluted conscience, persons fond of trifles, glecting objects fit for wise men, full of ingratide, and all such things, which in every man else e look upon as scars and deformities, and which e to single out, and take one alone as sufficient to sgrace and disrepute all the excellencies of our eighbour; but, if we would esteem them with the me severity in ourselves, and remember with how any such objections our little felicities are covered, would make us charitable in our censures, comassionate and gentle to others, apt to excuse, and ready to support their weaknesses, and in all cidents and chances to ourselves to be content and ankful, as knowing the worst of poverty and inonvenience to be a mercy, and a splendid fortune, respect of our demerits. I have read, that when the duke of Candia had voluntarily entered nto the incommodities of a religious poverty and tirement, he was one day spied and pitied by a rd of Italy, who, out of tenderness, wished him be more careful and nutritive of his person. The ood duke answered, 'Sir, be not troubled, and ink not that I am ill provided of conveniences; r I send a harbinger before, who makes my lodgngs ready, and takes care that I be royally enterained.' The lord asked him, who was his haringer? He answered, 'The knowledge of myself, nd the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, hich is eternal torments; and when, with this nowledge, I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided ever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deerve.'" The sum of this meditation consists in elieving, and considering, and reducing to practice nose thoughts, that we are nothing of ourselves, hat we have nothing of our own, that we have reeived more than ever we can discharge, that we ave added innumerable sins, that we can call othing our own but such things which we are ashamed to own, and such things which are apt to ruin us. If we do nothing contrary to the purpose and hearty persuasion of such thoughts, then we think meanly of ourselves; and, in order to it, we may make use of this advice, to let no day pass without some sad recollection and memory of somewhat which may put us to confusion, and mean opinion of ourselves; either call to mind the worst of our sins, or the indiscreetest of our actions, or the greatest of our shame, or the uncivilest of our affronts—any thing to make us descend lower, and kiss the foot of the mountain. And this consideration, applied also to every tumour of spirit as soon as it rises, may possibly allay it.

7. Secondly, "Christ's humble man bears contumelies evenly and sweetly, and desires not to be honoured by others;"[i] he chooses to do those things that deserve honour and a fair name; but then eats not of those fruits himself, but transmits them to the use of others and the glories of God. This is a certain consequence of the other; for he that truly disesteems himself, is content that others should do so too; and he who, with some regret and impatience, hears himself scorned or undervalued, hath not acquired the grace of humility: which Serapion, in Cassian, noted to a young person, who perpetually accused himself with the greatest semblances of humility, but was impatient when Serapion reproved him.[k] "Did you hope that I would have praised your humility, and have reputed you for a saint? It is a strange perverseness, to desire others to esteem highly of you for that in which to yourself you seem most unworthy." He that inquires into the faults of his own actions, requiring them that saw them to tell him in what he did amiss, not to learn the fault, but to engage them to praise it, cozens himself into pride, and makes humility the instrument. And a man would be ashamed, if he were told that he used stratagems for praise; but so glorious a thing is humility, that pride, to hide her own shame, puts on the other's vizor; it being more to a proud man's purposes to seem humble, than to be so. And such was the cynic whom Lucian derided, because that one searching his scrip, in expectation to have found in it mouldy bread, or old rags, he discovered a bale of dice, a box of perfumes, and the picture of his fair mistress. Carisianus walked in his gown in the feast of Saturn, and, when all Rome was let loose in wantonness, he put on the long robe of a senator, and a severe person; and yet nothing was more lascivious than he.[l] But the devil, pride, prevails sometimes upon the spirit of lust. Humility neither directly, nor by consequence, seeks for praise, and suffers it not to rest upon its own pavement, but it reflects it all upon God, and receives all lessenings and instruments of affront and disgrace, that mingle not with sin or indecencies, more willingly than panegyrics. When others have

[h] S. Hier. in Vita S. Anton.

[i] Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari.—GERSON.

[k] Appetere de humilitate laudem humilitatis non est virtus, ed subversio. Quid enim perversum magis aut indignius, uam ut indè velis haberi melior, unde tibi videris deterior.—S. BERNARD.

Est qui nequiter humiliat se, et interiora ejus sunt plena dolo.—ECCLUS. xii. 11.

[l] Nil lascivius est Carisiano;
In Saturnalibus ambulat togatus.—MART.

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their desires, thou not thine; the sayings of another are esteemed, thine slighted; others ask and obtain, thou beggest and art refused; they are cried up, thou disgraced and hissed at; and, while they are employed, thou art laid by, as fit for nothing; or an unworthy person commands thee, and rules thee like a tyrant; he reproves thee, suspects thee, reviles thee; canst thou bear this sweetly, and entertain the usage as thy just portion, and as an accident most fit and proper to thy person and condition? Dost thou not raise theatres to thyself, and take delight in the suppletories of thy own good opinion, and the flatteries of such whom thou endearest to thee, that their praising thee should heal the wounds of thine honour by an imaginary and fantastic restitution? He that is not content and patient in affronts, hath not yet learned humility of the holy Jesus.

8. Thirdly, As Christ's humble man is content in affronts, and not greedy of praise; so, when it is presented to him, he takes no contentment in it; and, if it be easy to want praise when it is denied, yet it is harder not to be delighted with it when it is offered. But there is much reason that we should put restraints upon ourselves, lest, if we be praised without desert, we find a greater judgment of God;[m] or, if we have done well, and received praise for it, we lose all our reward, which God hath deposited for them that "receive" not "their good things in this life." For "as silver is tried in the melter, and gold in the crucible, so is a man tried in the mouth of him that praises him:" that is, he is either clarified from his dross, by looking upon the praise as a homily to teach, and an instrument to invite his duty; or else, if he be already pure, he is consolidated, strengthened in the sobriety of his spirit, and retires himself closer into the strengths and securities of humility. Nay, this step of humility uses, in very holy persons, to be enlarged to a delight in affronts and disreputation in the world. "Now I begin to be Christ's disciple," said Ignatius the martyr, when, in his journey to Rome, he suffered perpetual revilings and abuse. St. Paul "rejoiced in his infirmities and reproach:" and all the apostles at Jerusalem went from the tribunal, "rejoicing that they were esteemed worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus."[n] This is an excellent condition and degree of humility. But I choose to add one that is less, but, in all persons, necessary.

9. Fourthly: "Christ's humble man is careful never to speak any thing that may redound to his own praise," unless it be with a design of charity or duty, that either God's glory, or the profit of his neighbour, be concerned in it; but never speaking with a design to be esteemed learned or honourable. St. Arsenius had been tutor to three Cæsars, Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius; but afterwards, when he became religious, no word escaped him that might represent and tell of his former greatness: and it is observable, concerning St. Jerome, that although he was of noble extraction, yet, in all his own writings, there is not the smallest intimation of it. This I desire to be understood only to the sense and purposes of humility, and that we have no designs of vanity and fancy in speaking learnedly, or recounting our exterior advantages; but if either the profit of our brother, or the glory of God, if either there be piety or charity in the design, it is lawful to publish all those excellencies with which God hath distinguished us from others. The young marquess of Castilion, being to do public exercise in his course of philosophy, made it a case of conscience whether he were bound to dispute his best, fearing lest vanity might transport him in the midst of those praises, which his collegiates might give him. It was an excellent consideration in the young gentleman: but, in actions civil and humane, since the danger is not so immediate, and a little complacency, becoming the instrument of virtue, and encouragement of studies, may, with like care, be referred to God, as the giver, and celebrate his praises; he might, with more safety, have done his utmost, it being, in some sense, a duty to encourage others, to give account of our graces and our labours, and all the appendant vanity may quickly be suppressed. A good name may give us opportunity of persuading others to the duty, especially in an age in which men choose their doctrines by the men that preach them: and St. Paul used his liberty when he was zealous for his Corinthian disciples, but restrained himself when it began to make reflections upon his own spirit. But although a good name be necessary, and in order to such good ends whither it may serve, it is lawful to desire it; yet a great name, and a pompous honour, and secular greatness, hath more danger in it to ourselves, than, ordinarily, it can have of benefit to others; and although a man may use the greatest honours to the greatest purposes, yet ordinary persons may not safely desire them: because it will be found very hard to have such mysterious and abstracted considerations, as to separate all our proper interest from the public end. To which I add this consideration, That the contempt of honour, and the instant pursuit of humility, is more effective of the ghostly benefit of others, than honours and great dignities can be, unless it be rarely and very accidentally.

10. If we need any new incentives to the practice of this grace, I can say no more, but that humility is truth, and pride is a lie: that the one glorifies God, the other dishonours him; humility makes men like angels, pride makes angels to become devils; that pride is folly, humility is the temper of a holy spirit and excellent wisdom; that humility is the way to glory, pride to ruin and confusion: humility makes saints on earth, pride undoes them: humility beatifies the saints in heaven, and "the elders throw their crowns at the foot of the throne;" pride disgraces a man among all the societies of earth: God loves one, and Satan solicits

[m] Tantâ enim consideratione trepidat (*David*,) nè aut de his in quibus laudatur, et non sunt, majus Dei judicium inveniat: aut de his in quibus laudatur, et sunt, competens præmium perdat.—S. GREG.

[n] Acts v. 41.

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the cause of the other, and promotes his own interest in it most of all. And there is no one grace, in which Christ propounded himself imitable so signally as in this of meekness and humility: for the enforcing of which he undertook the condition of a servant, and a life of poverty, and a death of disgrace; and washed the feet of his disciples, and even of Judas himself, that his action might be turned into a sermon to preach this duty, and to make it as eternal as his own story.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who wert pleased to lay aside the glories and incomprehensible majesty, which clothed thy infinity from before the beginning of creatures, and didst put on a cloud upon thy brightness, and wert invested with the impure and imperfect broken robe of human nature, and didst abate those splendours which broke through the veil, commanding devils not to publish thee, and men not to proclaim thy excellencies, and the apostles not to reveal those glories of thine, which they discovered encircling thee, upon mount Tabor, in thy transfiguration, and didst, by perpetual homilies, and symbolical mysterious actions, as with deep characters, engrave humility into the spirits of thy disciples, and the discipline of christianity; teach us to approach near to these, thy glories, which thou hast so covered with a cloud, that we might, without amazement, behold thy excellencies; make us to imitate thy gracious condescensions; take from us all vanity and fantastic complacencies in our own persons or actions; and, when there arises a reputation consequent to the performance of any part of our duty, make us to reflect the glory upon thee, suffering nothing to adhere to our own spirits but shame at our own imperfection, and thankfulness to thee for all thy assistances: let us never seek the praise of men from unhandsome actions, from flatteries and unworthy discourses, nor entertain the praise with delight, though it proceed from better principles; but fear and tremble, lest we deserve punishment, or lose a reward, which thou hast deposited for all them that seek thy glory, and despise their own, that they may imitate the example of their Lord. Thou, O Lord, didst triumph over sin and death; subdue, also, my proud understanding, and my prouder affections, and bring me under thy yoke; that I may do thy work, and obey my superiors, and be a servant of all my brethren in their necessities, and esteem myself inferior to all men by a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and in all things may obey thy laws, and conform to thy precedents, and enter into thine inheritance, O holy and eternal Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIX.

Of the Institution and Reception of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. As the sun among the stars, and man among the sublunary creatures, is the most eminent and noble, the prince of the inferiors, and their measure, or their guide; so is this action among all the instances of religion: it is the most perfect and consummate, it is an union of mysteries, and a consolidation of duties; it joins God and man, and confederates all the societies of men in mutual complexions, and the entertainments of an excellent charity; it actually performs all that could be necessary for man, and it presents to man as great a thing as God could give; for it is impossible any thing should be greater than himself. And when God gave his Son to the world, it could not be but he should give us all things else: and, therefore, this blessed sacrament is a consigning us to all felicities, because, after a mysterious and ineffable manner, we receive him, who is light and life, the fountain of grace, and the sanctifier of our secular comforts, and the author of holiness and glory. But as it was at first, so it hath been ever since; "Christ came into the world, and the world knew him not:" so Christ hath remained in the world, by the communication of this sacrament, and yet he is not rightly understood, and less truly valued. But Christ may say to us, as once to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, if thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is that speaks to thee, thou wouldst ask him:" so, if we were so wise, or so fortunate, to know the excellency of this gift of the Lord, it would fill us full of wonder and adoration, joy and thankfulness, great hopes and actual felicities, making us heirs of glory, by the great additions and present increment of grace.

2. "After supper Jesus took bread, and blessed it," and made it to be a heavenly gift: he gave them "bread," and told them it was "his body;" that body, which was broken for the redemption of man, for the salvation of the world. St. Paul calls it "bread," even after consecration; "the bread which we break, is it not the communication of the body of Christ?"[a] So that, by Divine faith, we are taught to express our belief of this mystery, in these words: The bread, when it is consecrated and made sacramental, is the body of our Lord; and the fraction and distribution of it is the communication of that body, which died for us upon the cross. He that doubts of either of the parts of this proposition, must either think Christ was not able to verify his word, and to make "bread," by his benediction, to become to us to be "his body;" or that St. Paul did not well interpret and understand this mystery, when he called it "bread." Christ reconciles them both, calling himself "the bread of life:" and if we be offended at it, because it is "alive," and therefore less apt to become food, we are invited to it because it is "bread;" and if the sacrament, to others, seem

[a] 1 Cor. x. 16.

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less mysterious, because it is "bread," we are heightened in our faith and reverence, because it is "life:" the bread of the sacrament is the life of our soul, and the body of our Lord is now conveyed to us, by being the bread of the sacrament. And if we consider how easy it is to faith, and how impossible it seems to curiosity, we shall be taught confidence and modesty; a resigning our understanding to the voice of Christ and his apostles, and yet expressing our own articles, as Christ did, in indefinite significations. And, possibly, it may not well consist with our duty to be inquisitive into the secrets of the kingdom, which we see, by plain event, hath divided the church almost as much as the sacrament hath united it, and which can only serve the purposes of the school, and of evil men, to make questions for that, and factions for these, but promote not the ends of a holy life, obedience, or charity.

3. Some so observe the literal sense of the words, that they understand them also in a natural: some so alter them, by metaphors and preternatural significations, that they will not understand them at all in a proper. We see it, we feel it, we taste it, and we smell it to be bread; and, by philosophy, we are led into a belief of that substance, whose accidents these are, as we are to believe that to be fire, which burns, and flames, and shines: but Christ also affirmed, concerning it, "This is my body;" and if faith can create an assent as strong as its object is infallible, or can be as certain in its conclusion, as sense is certain in its apprehensions, we must, at no hand, doubt but that it is Christ's body. Let the sense of that be what it will, so that we believe those words, and (whatsoever that sense is which Christ intended) that we no more doubt in our faith than we do in our sense; then our faith is not reprovable. It is hard to do so much violence to our sense, as not to think it "bread;" but it is more unsafe to do so much violence to our faith, as not to believe it to be "Christ's body." But it would be considered, that no interest of religion, no saying of Christ, no reverence of opinion, no sacredness of the mystery, is disavowed, if we believe both what we hear and what we see. He that believes it to be "bread," and yet verily to be "Christ's body," is only tied also, by implication, to believe God's omnipotence, that he, who affirmed it, can also verify it. And they, that are forward to believe the change of substance, can intend no more, but that it be believed verily to be the body of our Lord. And if they think it impossible to reconcile its being bread with the verity of being Christ's body, let them remember that themselves are put to more difficulties, and to admit of more miracles, and to contradict more sciences, and to refuse the testimony of sense, in affirming the special manner of transubstantiation. And, therefore, it were safer to admit the words in their first sense, in which we shall no more be at war with reason, nor so much with sense, and not at all with faith.[b] And, for persons of the contradictory persuasion, who, to avoid the natural sense, affirm it only to be figurative, since their design is only to make this sacrament to be Christ's body in the sense of faith, and not of philosophy, they may remember, that its being really present does not hinder but that all that reality may be spiritual; and if it be Christ's body, so it be not affirmed such in a natural sense and manner, it is still only the object of faith and spirit; and if it be affirmed only to be spiritual, there is then no danger to faith in admitting the words of Christ's institution, "This is my body." I suppose it to be a mistake, to think whatsoever is real must be natural; and it is no less to think spiritual to be only figurative: that is too much, and this is too little. Philosophy and faith may well be reconciled; and whatsoever objection can invade this union may be cured by modesty. And if we profess we understand not the manner of this mystery, we say no

[b] Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis corpus suum illum fecit, Hoc est corpus meum, dicendo, id est, figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisset, nisi veritatis esset corpus.—TERTUL. lib. iv. contr. Marcion. c. 40.

Quòd si quicquid ingreditur in os, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, et ille cibus qui sanctificatur per verbum Dei perque obsecrationem, juxta id quod habet materiale, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, &c. et hæc quidem de typico symbolicoque corpore.—ORIGEN. in c. 15. S. Matt.

Τὰ σύμβολα τοῦ σώματος τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος μετὰ τὴν ἐπίκλησιν ἐπιβάλλεται, καὶ ἕτερα γίνεται, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἰκείας ἐξίσταται φύσεως· μένει γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς προτέρας οὐσίας, καὶ τοῦ σχήματος, καὶ τοῦ εἴδρυς, καὶ ὁρατά ἐστι, καὶ ἁπτά, οἷα καὶ πρότερον ἦν.—THEOD. Dial. 2.

Idem disputando contra Eutychianos, docentes humanam Christi naturam conversum iri in divinam, eodem scil. modo quo panis in corpus Christi, ait, Certè eodem scil. modo, hoc est, nullo.

Ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ ὁ ἡμέτερος, &c. Our blessed Saviour, who hath called himself the living Bread and a Vine, hath also honoured the visible signs with the title and appellation of his Body and Blood, not changing their nature, but adding to nature, grace.—See the Dialog. called "The Immovable."

Sacramenta quæ sumimus corporis et sanguinis Christi, divina res est. Propter quod per eadem Divinæ efficimur consortes naturæ, et tamen non desinit esse substantia vel natura panis et vini; et certè imago et similitudo corporis et sanguinis Christi in actione mysteriorum celebrantur.—P. GELASIUS. libr. contr. Nestorium et Eutychetem.

Non quòd propriè corpus ejus sit panis, et poculum sanguis; sed quòd mysterium corporis ejus sanguinisque contineant.—FACUNDUS.

Si nam sacramenta quandam similitudinem non haberent earum rerum, quarum sunt sacramenta, omnino sacramenta non essent: ex hac autem similitudine plerumque ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt.—S. AUG. Epist. 23.

Quod ab omnibus appellatur sacrificium, signum est veri sacrificii, in quo caro Christi post assumptionem per sacramentum memoriæ celebratur.—Idem contr. Faustum Manich. lib. x. c. 2.

Apud Gratianum de Consecrat. dist. 2. c. 48, citatur Augustinus in libro Sententiarum Prosperi in hæc verba: "Sicut ergò cœlestis panis, qui Christi caro est, suo modo vocatur corpus Christi, cùm reverâ sit sacramentum corporis Christi, illius, viz. quod visibile, quod palpabile, mortale in cruce positum est; vocaturque ipsa immolatio carnis, quæ sacerdotis manibus fit Christi passio, mors, crucifixio, non rei veritate, sed significante mysterio: sic sacramentum fidei quod baptismus intelligitur, fides est."

Si ergò hæc vasa sanctificata ad privatos usus transferre sic periculosum est, in quibus non est verum corpus Christi, sed mysterium corporis ejus continetur; quantò magis vasa corporis nostri, &c.—S. CHRYSOST. Opere Imperf. in Matt.

Sicut nam antequam sanctificetur panis, panem nominamus, divinâ autem illum sanctificante gratiâ, mediante sacerdote, liberatus quidem est ab appellatione panis, dignus autem habitus est Dominici corporis appellatione, etiamsi natura panis in eo permansit, &c.—Idem in Epist. ad Cæsarium, in Biblioth. Pp. Colon. 1618.

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more but that it is a mystery; and if it had been necessary we should have construed it into the most latent sense, Christ himself would have given a clavis, and taught the church to unlock so great a secret. Christ said, "This is my body, this is my blood:" St. Paul said, "The bread of blessing that we break is the communication of the body of Christ, and the chalice which we bless is the communication of the blood of Christ;"[c] and "We are all one body, because we eat of one bread."[d] One proposition, as well as the other, is the matter of faith, and the latter of them is also of sense; one is as literal as the other: and he that distinguishes in his belief, as he may place the impropriety upon which part he please, and either say it is improperly called "bread," or improperly called "Christ's body;" so he can have nothing to secure his proposition from error, or himself from boldness, in decreeing, concerning mysteries, against the testimonies of sense, or beyond the modesty and simplicity of christian faith. Let us love and adore the abyss of Divine wisdom and goodness, and entertain the sacrament with just and holy receptions; and then we shall receive all those fruits of it, which an earnest disputer, or a peremptory dogmatizer, whether he happen right or wrong, hath no warrant to expect upon the interest of his opinion.

4. In the institution of this sacrament, Christ manifested, first, his almighty power; secondly, his infinite wisdom; and, thirdly, his unspeakable charity. First, his power is manifest, in making the symbols to be the instruments of conveying himself to the spirit of the receiver: he nourishes the soul with bread, and feeds the body with a sacrament; he makes the body spiritual, by his graces there ministered, and makes the spirit to be united to his body, by a participation of the Divine nature. In the sacrament, that body which is reigning in heaven, is exposed upon the table of blessing; and his body, which was broken for us, is now broken again, and yet remains impassible. Every consecrated portion of bread and wine does exhibit Christ entirely to the faithful receiver; and yet Christ remains one, while he is wholly ministered in ten thousand portions. So long as we call these mysterious, and make them intricate, to exercise our faith, and to represent the wonder of the mystery, and to increase our charity; our being inquisitive into the abyss can have no evil purposes. God hath instituted the rite in visible symbols, to make the secret grace as presential and discernible as it might; that, by an instrument of sense, our spirits might be accommodated, as with an exterior object, to produce an internal act. But it is the prodigy of a miraculous power, by instruments so easy, to produce effects so glorious. This, then, is the object of wonder and adoration.

5. Secondly: And this effect of power does also remark the Divine wisdom, who hath ordained such symbols; which not only, like spittle and clay toward the curing blind eyes, proclaim an almighty power, but they are apposite and proper to signify a duty, and become to us like the word of life; and from bread they turn into a homily. For, therefore, our wisest Master hath appointed bread and wine, that we may be corporally united to him; that as the symbols, becoming nutriment, are turned into the substance of our bodies; so Christ, being the food of our souls, should assimilate us, making us partakers of the Divine nature. It also tells us, that from hence we derive life and holy motion; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the staff of our life, and the light of our eyes, and the strength of our spirit; he is the viand for our journey, and the antepast of heaven. And because this holy mystery was intended to be a sacrament of union, that lesson is morally represented in the symbols; that as the salutary juice is expressed from many clusters running into one chalice, and the bread is a mass made of many grains of wheat; so we also (as the apostle infers from hence, himself observing the analogy) should "be one bread and one body, because we partake of that one bread." And it were to be wished, that from hence, also, all christians would understand a signification of another duty, and that they would often communicate; as remembering that the soul may need a frequent ministration, as well as the body its daily proportion. This consideration of the Divine wisdom is apt to produce reverence, humility, and submission of our understanding, to the immensity of God's unsearchable abysses.

6. Thirdly: But the story of the love of our dearest Lord is written in largest characters; who not only was at that instant busy in doing man the greatest good, even then when man was contriving his death and his dishonour; but contrived to represent his bitter passion to us, without any circumstances of horror, in symbols of pleasure and delight; that "we may taste and see how gracious our Lord is," who would not transmit the record of his passion to us in any thing that might trouble us. No love can be greater than that, which is so beatifical as to bestow the greatest good; and no love can be better expressed than that which, although it is productive of the greatest blessings, yet is curious also to observe the smallest circumstances. And not only both these, but many other circumstances and arguments of love, concur in the holy sacrament. 1. It is a tenderness of affection that ministers wholesome physic, with arts and instruments of pleasure: and such was the charity of our Lord, who brings health to us in a golden chalice; life, not in the bitter drugs of Egypt, but in spirits and quintessences; giving us apples of paradise, at the same time yielding food, and health, and pleasure. 2. Love desires to do all good to its beloved object; and that is the greatest love, which gives us the greatest blessings: and the sacrament, therefore, is the argument of his greatest love; for in it we receive the honey, and the honey-comb; the paschal lamb, with his bitter herbs; Christ,

[c] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

[d] Chrysost. notat Apostolum non dixisse panem esse μετοχὴν, sed κοινωνίαν τοῦ σώματος Χριστοῦ, ut indicaret ita participari corpus Domini, ut fiant unum participans et res participata, sicut verbum et Dei caro. Ὁ μετέχων partem aliquam sibi vindicat, ὁ κοινωνῶν totius particeps est.

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with all his griefs, and his passion, with all the salutary effects of it. 3. Love desires to be remembered, and to have his object in perpetual representment: and this sacrament Christ designed to that purpose, that he, who is not present to our eyes, might always be present to our spirits. 4. Love demands love again; and to desire to be beloved, is, of itself, a great argument of love: and as God cannot give us a greater blessing than his love, which is himself, with an excellency of relation to us superadded; so what greater demonstration of it can he make to us, than to desire us to love him, with as much earnestness and vehemency of desire, as if we were that to him which he is essentially to us, the Author of our being and our blessing? 5. And yet, to consummate this love, and represent it to be the greatest and most excellent, the holy Jesus hath in this sacrament designed, that we should be united in our spirits with him, incorporated to his body, partake of his Divine nature, and communicate in all his graces; and love hath no expression beyond this, that it desires to be united unto its object. So that what Moses said to the men of Israel, "What nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all things for which we call upon him?" we can enlarge in the meditation of this holy sacrament: for now the Lord our God calls upon us, not only to be nigh unto him, but to be all one with him; not only as he was, in the incarnation, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, but also to communicate, in spirit, in grace, in nature, in Divinity itself.

7. Upon the strength of the premises, we may sooner take an estimate of the graces which are conveyed to us, in the reception and celebration of this holy sacrament and sacrifice. For, as it is a commemoration and representment of Christ's death, so it is a commemorative sacrifice: as we receive the symbols and the mystery, so it is a sacrament. In both capacities, the benefit is next to infinite. First: for whatsoever Christ did at the institution, the same he commanded the church to do, in remembrance and repeated rites; and himself also does the same thing in heaven for us, making perpetual intercession for his church, the body of his redeemed ones, by representing to his Father his death and sacrifice. There he sits, a High Priest continually, and offers still the same one perfect sacrifice; that is, still represents it as having been once finished and consummate, in order to perpetual and never-failing events. And this, also, his ministers do on earth; they offer up the same sacrifice to God, the sacrifice of the cross, by prayers, and a commemorating rite and representment, according to his holy institution. And as all the effects of grace and the titles of glory were purchased for us on the cross, and the actual mysteries of redemption perfected on earth, but are applied to us, and made effectual to single persons and communities of men, by Christ's intercession in heaven; so also they are promoted by acts of duty and religion here on earth, that we may be "workers together with God," (as St. Paul expresses it,[e]) and, in virtue of the eternal and all-sufficient sacrifice, may offer up our prayers and our duty; and by representing that sacrifice, may send up, together with our prayers, an instrument of their graciousness and acceptation. The funerals of a deceased friend are not only performed at his first interring, but in the monthly minds and anniversary commemorations; and our grief returns upon the sight of a picture, or upon any instance which our dead friend desired us to preserve as his memorial: we "celebrate and exhibit the Lord's death," in sacrament and symbol; and this is that great express, which, when the church offers to God the Father, it obtains all those blessings which that sacrifice purchased. Themistocles snatched up the son of king Admetus, and held him between himself and death, to mitigate the rage of the king, and prevailed accordingly. Our very holding up the Son of God, and representing him to his Father, is the doing an act of mediation and advantage to ourselves, in the virtue and efficacy of the Mediator. As Christ is a priest in heaven for ever, and yet does not sacrifice himself afresh, nor yet without a sacrifice could he be a priest; but, by a daily ministration and intercession, represents his sacrifice to God, and offers himself as sacrificed: so he does upon earth, by the ministry of his servants; he is offered to God, that is, he is, by prayers and the sacrament, represented or "offered up to God, as sacrificed;" which, in effect, is a celebration of his death, and the applying it to the present and future necessities of the church, as we are capable, by a ministry like to his in heaven. It follows, then, that the celebration of this sacrifice be, in its proportion,[f] an instrument of applying the proper sacrifice to all the purposes which it first designed. It is ministerially, and by application, an instrument propitiatory; it is eucharistical, it is an homage, and an act of adoration; and it is impetratory, and obtains for us, and for the whole church, all the benefits of the sacrifice, which is now celebrated and applied; that is, as this rite is the remembrance and ministerial celebration of Christ's sacrifice, so it is destined to do honour to God, to express the homage and duty of his servants, to acknowledge his supreme dominion, to give him thanks and worship, to beg pardon, blessings, and supply of all our needs. And its profit is enlarged, not only to the persons celebrating, but to all to whom they design it, according to the nature of sacrifices and prayers, and all such solemn actions of religion.

8. Secondly: If we consider this, not as the act and ministry of ecclesiastical persons, but as the duty of the whole church communicating; that is, as it is a sacrament, so it is like the springs of Eden, from whence issue many rivers, or the trees of celestial Jerusalem, bearing various kinds of fruit. For whatsoever was offered in the sacrifice, is given in the sacrament; and whatsoever the testament bequeaths, the holy mysteries dispense. 1. "He

[e] 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[f] Iste calix, benedictione solenni sacratus, ad totius hominis vitam salutemque proficit; simul medicamentum et holocaustum, ad sanandas infirmitates et purgandas iniquitates, existens.—S. CYP. de Cœnâ Dom.

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that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him;"[g] Christ in his temple and his resting-place, and the worthy communicant in sanctuary and a place of protection: and every holy soul having feasted at his table, may say, as St. Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[h] So that, "to live is Christ:"[i] "Christ is our life,"[k] and he dwells in the body and the spirit of every one that eats Christ's flesh and drinks his blood. Happy is that man that sits at the table of angels, that puts his hand into the dish with the King of all the creatures, and feeds upon the eternal Son of God; joining things below with things above, heaven with earth, life with death; "that mortality might be swallowed up of life," and sin be destroyed by the inhabitation of its greatest conqueror. And now I need not enumerate any particulars: since the Spirit of God hath ascertained us, that Christ enters into our hearts, and takes possession, and abides there; that we are made temples and celestial mansions; that we are all one with our Judge, and with our Redeemer; that our Creator is bound unto his creature with bonds of charity, which nothing can dissolve, unless our own hands break them; that man is united with God, and our weakness is fortified by his strength, and our miseries wrapped up in the golden leaves of glory. 2. Hence it follows, that the sacrament is an instrument of reconciling us to God, and taking off the remanent guilt and stain, and obligations of our sins. "This is the blood that was shed for you, for the remission of sins. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." And such are all they who worthily eat the flesh of Christ; by receiving him, they more and more receive remission of sins, redemption, sanctification, wisdom, and certain hopes of glory. For as the soul, touching and united to the flesh of Adam, contracts the stain of original misery and imperfection; so much the rather shall the soul, united to the flesh of Christ, receive pardon and purity, and all those blessed emanations, from our union with the second Adam. But this is not to be understood, as if the first beginnings of our pardon were in the holy communion; for then a man might come, with his impurities along with him, and lay them on the holy table, to stain and pollute so bright a presence. No; first, repentance must "prepare the ways of the Lord:" and, in this holy rite, those words of our Lord are verified, "He that is justified, let him be justified still;" that is, here he may receive the increase of grace; and as it grows, so sin dies, and we are reconciled by nearer unions and approximations to God.

9. Thirdly: The holy sacrament is the pledge of glory and the earnest of immortality;[l] for when we have received him who hath "overcome death, and henceforth dies no more," he becomes to us like the tree of life in paradise; and the consecrated symbols are like the seeds of an eternal duration, springing up in us to eternal life, nourishing our spirits with grace, which is but the prologue and the infancy of glory, and differs from it only as a child from a man. But God first raised up his Son to life, and by giving him to us, hath also consigned us to the same state; for "our life is hid with Christ, in God."[m] "When we lay down, and cast aside the impurer robes of flesh, they are then but preparing for glory; and if, by the only touch of Christ, bodies were redintegrate and restored to natural perfections; how shall not we live for ever, who eat his flesh and drink his blood?" It is the discourse of St. Cyril.[n] Whatsoever the Spirit can convey to the body of the church, we may expect from this sacrament; for as the Spirit is the instrument of life and action, so the blood of Christ is the conveyance of his Spirit. And let all the mysterious places of holy Scripture, concerning the effects Christ communicated in the blessed sacrament, be drawn together in one scheme, we cannot but observe, that, although they are so expressed as that their meaning may seem intricate and involved, yet they cannot be drawn to any meaning at all, but it is as glorious in its sense as it is mysterious in the expression: and the more intricate they are, the greater is their purpose; no words being apt and proportionate to signify this spiritual secret, and excellent effects of the Spirit. A veil is drawn before all these testimonies, because the people were not able to behold the glory which they cover with their curtain; and "Christ dwelling in us," and "giving us his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink;" and "the hiding of our life with God," and "the communition of the body of Christ," and "Christ being our life," are such secret glories, that, as the fruition of them is the portion of the other world, so also is the full perception and understanding of them: for, therefore, God appears to us in a cloud, and his glories in a veil; that we, understanding more of it by its concealment than we can by its open face, which is too bright for our weak eyes, may, with more piety, also entertain the greatness, by these indefinite and mysterious significations, than we can by plain and direct intuitions; which, like the sun in a direct ray, enlightens the object, but confounds the organ.

10. I should but in other words describe the same glories, if I should add, That this holy sacrament does enlighten the spirit of man, and clarify it with spiritual discernings; and as he was to the two disciples at Emmaus, so also to other faithful people, "Christ is known in the breaking of bread;" that it is a great defence against the hostilities of our ghostly enemies,[o] this holy bread being, like the

[g] John vi. 56. [h] Gal. ii. 20.
[i] Phil. i. 21. [k] Col. iii. 4.
[l] Ἀθανασίας φάρμακον.—S. IGNAT. Ep. ad Ephes. Spes resurrectionis.—Optat. Milevit. lib. vi. contra Parmen. Qui manducat carnem meam, habet vitam æternam, et resuscitabo eum in novissimo die.—S. John vi. 54.
[m] Colos iii. 3.
[n] S. Cyril. Alex. lib. iv. in Joh. c. 14. Sic et corpora nostra percipientia Eucharistiam jam non sunt corruptibilia, spem resurrectionis habentia.—IRENÆ. lib. iv. c. 34.
[o] Tanquam leones ignem spirantes recedamus ex illâ mensâ, dæmonibus facti terribiles.—S. CHRYS. Poculum quo inebriatur affectus fidelium.—S. AMBROS. Ser. xv. in Psal. 118.

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cake in Gideon's camp, overturning the tents of Midian; that it is the relief of our sorrows, the antidote and preservative of souls, the viand of our journey, the guard and passport of our death, the wine of angels; that it is more healthful than rhubarb, more pleasant than cassia; that the betel and lareca of the Indians, the moly[p] or nepenthe of Pliny, the lirinon of the Persians, the balsam of Judea, the manna of Israel, the honey of Jonathan, are but weak expressions, to tell us that this is excellent above art and nature, and that nothing is good enough in philosophy to become its emblem. All these must needs fall very short of those plain words of Christ, "This is my body." The other may become the ecstasies of piety, the transportation of joy and wonder; and are like the discourse of St. Peter upon mount Tabor, he was resolved to say some great thing, but he knew not what: but when we remember, that the body of our Lord and his blood is communicated to us in the bread and the chalice of blessing, we must sit down and rest ourselves, for this is, "the mountain of the Lord," and we can go no farther.

11. In the next place it will concern our inquiry, to consider how we are to prepare ourselves: for at the gate of life a man may meet with death: and, although this holy sacrament be like manna, in which the obedient find the relishes of obedience; the chaste, of purity; the meek persons, of content and humility; yet vicious and corrupted palates find also the gust of death and coloquintida. The Sybarites invited their women to their solemn sacrifices a full year before the solemnity; that they might, by previous dispositions and a long foresight, attend, with gravity and fairer order, the celebration of the rites.[q] And it was a reasonable answer of Pericles, to one that asked him, why he, being a philosophical and severe person, came to a wedding trimmed and adorned like a paranymph: "I come adorned to an adorned person;" trimmed, to a bridegroom. And we, also, if we come to the marriage of the Son with the soul, (which marriage is celebrated in this sacred mystery,) and have not on a wedding-garment, shall be cast into outer darkness, the portion of undressed and unprepared souls.

12. For from this sacrament are excluded all unbaptized persons, and such who lie in a known sin, of which they have not purged themselves by the apt and proper instruments of repentance. For if the paschal lamb was not to be eaten but by persons pure and clean, according to the sanctifications of the law; the Son of God can less endure the impurities of the spirit, than God could suffer the uncleannesses of the law. St. Paul hath given us instruction in this: "First, let a man examine himself, and so let him eat: for he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."[r] That is, although, in the church of Corinth, by reason of the present schism, the public discipline of the church was neglected, and every man permitted to himself; yet, even then, no man was disobliged from his duty of private repentance, and holy preparations, to the perception of so great a mystery; that "the Lord's body" may be discerned from common nutriment. Now, nothing can so unhallow and desecrate the rite, as the remanent affection to a sin, or a crime unrepented of. And self-examination is prescribed, not for itself, but in order to abolition of sin and death; for itself is a relative term and an imperfect duty, whose very nature is in order to something beyond it. And this was, in the primitive church, understood to so much severity, that if a man had relapsed, after one public repentance, into a foul crime, he was never again readmitted to the holy communion; and the fathers of the council of Eliberis call it a mocking and jesting at the communion of our Lord, to give it once again, after a repentance and a relapse, and a second or third postulation.[s] And, indeed, we use to make a sport of the greatest instruments of religion, when we come to them after an habitual vice, whose face we have, it may be, wetted with a tear, and breathed upon it with a sigh, and abstained from the worst of crimes for two or three days, and come to the sacrament to be purged, and to take our rise by going a little back from our sin, that afterwards we may leap into it with more violence, and enter into its utmost angle; this is dishonouring the body of our Lord, and deceiving ourselves. Christ and Belial cannot cohabit: but if we have left all our sins, and have no fondness of affection towards them, if we hate them, (which then we shall best know when we leave them, and with complacency entertain their contraries,) then Christ hath washed our feet, and then he invites us to his holy supper. Hands dipped in blood, or polluted with unlawful gains, or stained with the spots of flesh, are most unfit to handle the holy body of our Lord, and minister nourishment to the soul. Christ loves not to enter into the mouth full of cursings, oaths, blasphemies, revilings, or evil speakings; and a heart full of vain and vicious thoughts, stinks like the lake of Sodom; he finds no rest there, and when he enters, he is vexed with the unclean conversation of the impure inhabitants, and flies from thence with the wings of a dove, that he may retire to pure and whiter habitations. St. Justin Martyr, reckoning the predispositions required of every faithful soul for the entertainment of his Lord, says, that "it is not lawful for any to eat the eucharist, but to him that is washed in the laver of regeneration for the remission of sins, that believes Christ's doctrine to be true, and that lives according to the discipline of the holy Jesus."[t] And therefore, St. Ambrose refused to minister the holy communion to the emperor Theodosius,[u] till, by public repent-

[p] Μῶλυ δέ μιν καλέουσι θεοί· χαλεπὸν δέ τ' ὀρύσσειν
Ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι· θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται.—HOMER.
[q] Plutarch. Sympos.
[r] 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.
[s] Concil. Eliber. c. 3.
[t] S. Basil. de Bapt. lib. ii. c. 3. Legatur totum caput. S. Ambros. lib. vi. c. 37. in Luc. 9.
Ubique mysterii ordo servatur, ut priùs per remissionem peccatorum vulneribus medicina tribuatur, postea alimonia mensæ cœlestis exuberet.—PAULIN. in Vitâ S. Ambros.
[u] Si dux quispiam, si consul ipse, si qui diademate ornatur indignè adeat, cohibe et coërce. Quòd si ipse pellere non audes, mihi dicas, non permittam ista fieri; animam potiùs tradam meam, quàm Dominicum alicui corpus indigné.—S. CHRYSOST. hom. 83. in Matt.

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ance, he had reconciled himself to God and the society of faithful people, after the furious and choleric rage and slaughter committed at Thessalonica: and as this act was like to cancellating and a circumvallation of the holy mysteries, and in that sense, and so far, was a proper duty for a prelate, to whose dispensation the rites are committed; so it was an act of duty to the emperor, of paternal and tender care, not of proper authority or jurisdiction, which he could not have over his prince, but yet had a care and the supravision of a teacher over him; whose soul St. Ambrose had betrayed, unless he had represented his indisposition to communicate in expressions of magisterial or doctoral authority and truth. For this holy sacrament is a nourishment of spiritual life, and, therefore, cannot with effect be ministered to them who are in the state of spiritual death; it is giving a cordial to a dead man; and, although the outward rite be ministered, yet the grace of the sacrament is not communicated; and, therefore, it were well that they also abstained from the rite itself. For a fly can boast of as much privilege, as a wicked person can receive from this holy feast,[x] and oftentimes pays his life for his access to forbidden delicacies, as certainly as they.

13. It is more generally thought by the doctors of the church, that our blessed Lord administered the sacrament to Judas, although he knew he sold him to the Jews. Some others deny it, and suppose Judas departed presently after the sop given him, before he communicated.[y] However it was, Christ, who was Lord of the sacraments, might dispense it as he pleased; but we must minister and receive it according to the rules he hath since described; but it becomes a precedent to the church in all succeeding ages, although it might also have in it something extraordinary, and apter to the first institution; for, because the fact of Judas was secret, not yet made notorious, Christ chose rather to admit him into the rites of external communion than to separate him, with an open shame, for a fault not yet made open. For our blessed Lord did not reveal the man and his crime, till the very time of ministration, if Judas did communicate. But if Judas did not communicate, and that our blessed Lord gave him the sop at the paschal supper, or at the interval between it and the institution of his own, it is certain that Judas went out as soon as he was discovered, and left this part of discipline upon record, That when a crime is made public and notorious, the governors of the church, according to their power, are to deny to give the blessed sacrament, till by repentance such persons be restored.[z] In private sins, or sins not known by solemnities of law, or evidence of fact, good and bad are entertained in public communion; and it is not to be accounted a crime in them that minister it, because they cannot avoid it, or have not competent authority to separate persons, whom the public act of the church hath not separated: but if once a public separation be made, or that the fact is notorious, and the sentence of law is in such cases already declared; they that come, and he that rejects them not, both pollute the blood of the everlasting covenant. And here it is applicable, what God spake by the prophet: "If thou wilt separate the precious thing from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth."[a]

But this is wholly a matter of discipline, arbitrary, and in the power of the church; nothing in it of Divine commandment, but what belongs to the communicants themselves: for St. Paul reproves them that receive disorderly, but gives no orders to the Corinthian presbyters to reject any that present themselves. Neither did our blessed Lord leave any commandment concerning it, nor hath the holy Scripture given rules or measures, concerning its actual reduction to practice; neither who are to be separated, nor for what offences, nor by what authority, nor who is to be the judge. And, indeed, it is a judgment that can only belong to God, who knows the secrets of hearts, the degrees of every sin, the beginnings and portions of repentance, the sincerity of purposes, by what thoughts and designs men begin to be accepted, who are hypocrites, and who are true men. But when many and common men come to judge, they are angry upon trifling mistakes and weak disputes; they call that sin, that angers their party, or grieves their interest; they turn charity into pride, and admonition into tyranny; they set up a tribunal, that themselves may sit higher, not that their brethren may walk more securely: and then concerning sins, in most cases, they are most incompetent judges; they do not know all their kinds; they miscall many; they are ignorant of the ingredient and constituent parts and circumstances; they themselves make false measures, and give out according to them, when they please; and when they list not, they can change the balance. When the matter is public, evident, and notorious, the man is to be admonished of his danger by the minister, but not, by him, to be forced from it: for the power of the minister of holy things is but the power of a preacher and a counsellor, of a physician and a guide; it hath in it no coercion or violence, but what is indulged to it by human laws, and by consent, which may vary as its principle.

Add to this, that the grace of God can begin the work of repentance in an instant, and in what period or degree of repentance the holy communion is to be administered, no law of God declares; which, therefore, plainly allows it to every period, and leaves no difference, except where the discipline of the church, and the authority of the supreme power, doth intervene. For since we do not find in Scripture that the apostles did drive from the communion of holy things, even those whom they delivered

[x] Exta prægusto Deûm, Moror inter aras, templa perlustro omnia;
In capite regis sedeo, cùm visum est mihi,
Et matronarum casta delibo oscula.—PHÆDR. Fab. 80.

[y] Negatur à Clemente Rom. v. Const. c. 16. ab Hilario, c. 30. in Matt. Innocentio, lib. iii. de Myster. c. 13. à Ruperto, Hildebrand. Cenoman. et paucis aliis.

[z] Nec à communione prohibere quenquam possumus, nisi aut sponte confessum, aut in aliquo sive seculari sive Ecclesiastico Judicio nominatum atque convictum.—S. AUG. lib. I. Homil. 50. S. THOM. 3. p. q. 81. a. 2.

[a] Jer. xv. 19.

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over to Satan or other censures, we are left to consider that, in the nature of the thing, those who are in the state of weakness and infirmity have more need of the solemn prayers of the church, and, therefore, by presenting themselves to the holy sacrament, approach towards that ministry which is the most effectual cure; especially since the very presenting themselves is an act of religion, and, therefore, supposes an act of repentance and faith, and other little introductions to its fair reception; and if they may be prayed for, and prayed with, why they may not also be communicated, which is the solemnity of the greatest prayer, is not yet clearly revealed.

This discourse relates only to private ministry: for when I affirm, that there is no command from Christ, to all his ministers, to refuse whom they are pleased to call "scandalous" or "sinners," I intend to defend good people from the tyranny and arbitrary power of those great companies of ministers, who, in so many hundred places, would have a judicature supreme in spirituals, which would be more intolerable than if they had, in one province, twenty thousand judges of life and death. But when the power of separation and interdiction is only in some more eminent and authorized persons, who take public cognizance of causes by solemnities of law, and exercise their power but in some rare instances, and then also for the public interest, in which, although they may be deceived, yet they are the most competent and likely judges, much of the inconvenience, which might otherwise follow, is avoided: and then it only remains, that they consider, in what cases it can be a competent and a proper infliction upon sinners, to take from them that, which is the means and ministry of grace and recovery; whether they have any warrant from Christ, or precedent in the apostles' practice, and how far. As for the forms and usages of the primitive church, they were hugely different, sometimes for one cause, sometimes for another. Sometimes whole churches have been excommunicated; sometimes the criminal, and all his household for his offence, as it happened in the excommunication of Andronicus and Thoas, in Synesius, in the year 411:[b] sometimes they were absolved and restored by lay-confessors, sometimes by emperors, as it happened to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nice, who were absolved by Constantine, from the sentence of excommunication inflicted by the Nicene fathers; and a monk did excommunicate Theodosius the younger.[c] So that in this, there can be no certainty to make a measure and a rule. The surest way, most agreeable to the precedents of Scripture, and the analogy of the gospel, is that, "by the word of their proper ministry," all sinners should be separate from the holy communion, that is, threatened, by the words of God, with damnation, and fearful temporal dangers, if themselves, knowing an unrepented sin, and a remanent affection to sin, to be within them, shall dare to profane that body and blood of our Lord by so impure an address. The evil is to themselves; and if the ministers declare this powerfully, they are acquitted. But concerning other judgments or separations, the supreme power can forbid all assembling, and, therefore, can permit them to all, and, therefore, can deny them, or grant them, to single persons: and, therefore, when he, by laws, makes separations in order to public benefit, they are to be obeyed: but it is not to be endured, that single presbyters should, upon vain pretences, erect so high a tribunal and tyranny over consciences.

14. The duty of preparation, that I here discourse of, is such a preparation as is a disposition to life; it is not a matter of convenience or advantage, to repent of our sins before the communion; but it is of absolute necessity, we perish if we neglect it; for we "eat damnation," and Satan enters into us, not Christ. And this preparation is not the act of a day or a week; but it is a new state of life: no man, that is an habitual sinner, must come to this feast, till he hath wholly changed his course of life. And then, according as the actions of infirmity have made less or greater invasion upon his peace and health, so are the acts of repentance to be proportioned; in which the greatness of the prevarications, their neighbourhood to death, or their frequent repetition, and the conduct of a spiritual man, are to give us counsel and determination. When a ravening and hungry wolf is destitute of prey, he eats the turf, and loads his stomach with the glebe he treads on; but as soon as he finds better food, he vomits up his first load. Our secular and sensual affections are loads of earth upon the conscience; and when we approach the table of the Lord, to eat the bread of the elect, and to drink the wine of angels, we must reject such impure adhesions, that holy persons, being nourished with holy symbols, may be sanctified, and receive the eternal reward of holiness.

15. But as none must come hither but they that are in the state of grace, or charity, and the love of God and their neighbours, and that the abolition of the state of sin is the necessary preparation, and is the action of years, and was not accepted as sufficient till the expiration of divers years by the primitive discipline, and, in some cases, not till the approach of death: so there is another preparation, which is of less necessity, which supposes the state of grace, and that oil is burning in our lamps; but yet it is a preparation of ornament, a trimming up the soul, a dressing the spirit with degrees and instances of piety, and progresses of perfection: and it consists in setting apart some portion of our time, before the communion, that it be spent in prayer, in meditation, in renewing the vows of holy obedience, in examining our consciences, in mortifying our lesser irregularities, in devotions and actions of precise religion, in acts of faith, of hope, of charity, of zeal and holy desires, in acts of eucharist or thanksgiving, of joy at the approach of so blessed an opportunity, and all the acts of virtue whatsoever, which have indefinite relation to this and to other mysteries; but yet are specially to be exercised upon this occasion, because this is the most perfect of external rites, and the most mysterious instru-

[b] Synes. ep. 79.

[c] Theod. Hist. lib. v. 36. Baron. tom. v. A. D. 425. sect. 16.

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ment of sanctification and perfection. There is no time or degree to be determined in this preparation; but they "to whom much is forgiven, will love much;" and they,—who understand the excellence and holiness of the mystery, the glory of the guest that comes to inhabit, and the indecency of the closet of their hearts, by reason of the adherences of impurity, the infinite benefit then designed, and the increase of degrees by the excellence of these previous acts of holiness,—will not be too inquisitive into the necessity of circumstances and measures, but do it heartily, and devoutly, and reverently, and, as much as they can, ever esteeming it necessary, that the actions of so great solemnity should by some actions of piety, attending like handmaids, be distinguished from common employments, and remarked for the principal and most solemn of religious actions. The primitive church gave the holy sacrament to infants immediately after baptism,[d] and by that act transmitted this proposition, That nothing was of absolute necessity but innocency and purity from sin, and a being in the state of grace;[e] other actions of religion are excellent additions to the dignity of the person and honour of the mystery; but they were such, of which infants were not capable. The sum is this: After the greatest consociation of religious duties for preparation, no man can be sufficiently worthy to communicate: let us take care that we be not unworthy, by bringing a guilt with us, or the remanent affection to a sin.

Est gloriosus sanè convictus Dei;
Sed illi qui invitatur, non qui invisus est.

16. When the happy hour is come, in which the Lord vouchsafes to enter into us, and dwell with us, and be united with his servants, we must then do the same acts over again with greater earnestness and intention; confess the glories of God and thy own unworthiness, praise his mercy with ecstasy of thanksgiving and joy, make oblation of thyself, of all thy faculties and capacities, pray, and read, and meditate, and worship: and that thou mayest more opportunely do all this, rise early to meet the Bridegroom, pray for special assistance, enter into the assembly of faithful people cheerfully, attend there diligently, demean thyself reverently, and, before any other meat or drink, receive the body of thy Saviour with pure hands, with holy intention, with a heart full of joy, and faith, and hope, and wonder, and eucharist. These things I, therefore, set down irregularly and without method, because, in these actions, no rule can be given to all persons; and only such a love, and such a religion, in general, is to be recommended, which will overrun the banks, and not easily stand confined within the margent of rules, and artificial prescriptions. Love and religion are boundless, and all acts of grace, relating to the present mystery, are fit and proportioned entertainments of our Lord. This only remember, that we are, by the mystery of "one bread," confederated into one body, and the communion of saints, and that the sacrifice, which we then commemorate, was designed, by our Lord, for the benefit of all his church: let us be sure to draw all faithful people into the society of the present blessing, joining, with the holy man that ministers, in prayers, and offerings of that mystery, for the benefit of all sorts of men, of Christ's catholic church. And it were also an excellent act of christian communion, and agreeable to the practice of the church in all ages, to make an oblation to God for the poor; that, as we are fed by Christ's body, so we also should feed Christ's body, making such returns as we can, a grain of frankincense in exchange for a province, an act of duty and christian charity as eucharistical for the present grace, that all the body may rejoice and glory in the salvation of the Lord.

17. After thou hast received that pledge of immortality and antepast of glory, even the Lord's body in a mystery, leave not thy Saviour there alone, but attend him with holy thoughts and colloquies of prayer and eucharist. It was sometime counted infamous for a woman to entertain a second love, till the body of her dead husband was dissolved into ashes, and disappeared in the form of a body. And it were well, that so long as the consecrated symbols remain within us, according to common estimate, we should keep the flame bright, and the perfume of an actual devotion burning, that our communion be not a transient act, but a permanent and lasting intercourse with our Lord.[f] But in this every man best knows his own opportunities and necessities of diversion. I only commend earnestly to practice, that every receiver should make a recollection of himself, and the actions of the day, that he improve it to the best advantage, that he show unto our Lord all the defects of his house, all his poverty and weaknesses: and this let every man do, by such actions and devotions which he can best attend, and himself, by the advice of a spiritual man, finds of best advantage. I would not make the practice of religion, especially in such irregular instances, to be an art, or a burden, or a snare, to scrupulous persons: what St. Paul said in the case of charity I say also in this; "He that sows plentifully shall reap plentifully, and he that sows sparingly shall gather" at the same rate; "let every man do as himself purposeth in his heart." Only it were well in this sacrament of love we had some correspondency, and proportionable returns of charity and religious affections.

18. Some religious persons have moved a question, Whether it were better to communicate often or seldom? some thinking it more reverence to those holy mysteries to come but seldom; while others say, it is greater religion or charity to come frequently. But I suppose this question does not differ much from a dispute, Whether it is better to

[d] Clem. Rom. lib. viii. Constit. c. 20. Concil. Tolet. i. c. 11. S. Aug. ep. 23. ad Bonif. et ep. 107. et lib. iv. de Trin. c. 10.

[e] Habentem adhuc voluntatem peccandi gravari magis dico eucharistiæ perceptione quàm purificari; sed hoc de iis dico quos capitalia et mortalia non gravant.—GENNAD. lib. iii. de Eccl. Dogmat. c. 53.

[f] Malè olim actum est, cùm sacrificia compotationibus finierant.

Ἀπὸ τούτου γέ φασι τὸ μεθύειν ὠνομάσθαι, ὅτι μετὰ τὸ θύειν ἔθος ἦ τοῖς προτέροις οἰνοῦσθαι.

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pray often, or to pray seldom? For whatsoever is commonly pretended against a frequent communion, may, in its proportion, object against a solemn prayer; remanent affection to a sin, enmity with neighbours, secular avocations to the height of care and trouble: for these either are great indecencies, in order to a holy prayer; or else, are direct irregularities, and unhallow the prayer. And the celebration of the holy sacrament is, in itself and its own formality, a sacred, solemn, and ritual prayer, in which we invocate God by the merits of Christ, expressing that adjuration, not only in words, but in actual representment and commemoration of his passion. And if the necessities of the church were well considered, we should find that a daily sacrifice of prayer, and a daily prayer of sacrifice, were no more but what her condition requires: and I would to God the governors of churches would take care, that the necessities of kings and kingdoms, of churches and states, were represented to God by the most solemn and efficacious intercessions; and Christ hath taught us none greater than the praying in the virtue and celebration of his sacrifice. And this is the counsel that the church received from Ignatius: "Hasten frequently to approach the eucharist, the glory of God. For when this is daily celebrated, we break the powers of Satan, who turns all his actions into hostilities and darts of fire." But this concerns the ministers of religion, who, living in communities and colleges, must make religion the business of their lives, and support kingdoms, and serve the interest of kings, by the prayer of a daily sacrifice. And yet, in this ministry, the clergy may serve their own necessary affairs, if the ministration be divided into courses, as it was, by the economy and wisdom of Solomon, for the temple.

19. But concerning the communion of secular and lay persons, the consideration is something different. St. Austin gave this answer to it: "To receive the sacrament every day, I neither praise nor reprove; at least, let them receive it every Lord's day."[g] And this he spake to husbandmen and merchants. At the first commencement of christianity, while the fervours apostolical and the calentures of infant christendom did last, the whole assembly of faithful people communicated every day; and this lasted in Rome and Spain until the time of St. Jerome:[h] concerning which diligence he gives the same censure, which I now recited from St. Austin; for it suffered inconvenience by reason of a declining piety, and the intervening of secular interests. But then it came to once a week; and yet that was not every where strictly observed.[i] But that it be received once every fortnight, St. Hierome counsels very strongly to Eustochium, a holy virgin: "Let the virgins confess their sins twice every month, or oftener; and, being fortified with the communion of the Lord's body, let them manfully fight against the devil's forces and attempts." A while after, it came to once a month, then once a year, then it fell from that too: till all the christians in the west were commanded to communicate every Easter by the decree of a great council[k] above five hundred years since. But the church of England, finding that too little, hath commanded all her children to receive thrice every year at least, intending that they should come oftener; but of this she demands an account. For it hath fared with this sacrament as with other actions of religion, which have descended from flames to still fires, from fires to sparks, from sparks to embers, from embers to smoke, from smoke to nothing. And although the public declension of piety is such, that, in this present conjuncture of things, it is impossible men should be reduced to a daily communion; yet that they are to communicate frequently is so a duty, that, as no excuse but impossibility can make the omission innocent, so the loss and consequent want is infinite and invaluable.

20. For the holy communion being a remembrance and sacramental repetition of Christ's passion, and the application of his sacrifice to us and the whole catholic church; as they who seldom communicate, delight not to remember the passion of our Lord, and sin against his very purpose, and one of the designs of institution; so he cares not to receive the benefits of the sacrifice, who so neglects their application, and reducing them to actual profit and reception. "Whence came the sanctimony of the primitive christians? whence came their strict observation of the Divine commandments? whence was it that they persevered in holy actions with hope and an unweary diligence? from whence did their despising worldly things come, and living with common possession, and the distributions of an universal charity? Whence came these, and many other excellencies, but from a constant prayer and a daily eucharist? They who every day represented the death of Christ, every day were ready to die for Christ." It was the discourse of an ancient and excellent person. And if we consider, this sacrament is intended to unite the spirits and affections of the world, and that it is diffusive and powerful to this purpose, ("for we are one body," saith St. Paul, "because we partake of one bread,") possibly we may have reason to say, that the wars of kingdoms, the animosity of families, the infinite multitude of law suits, the personal hatreds, and the universal want of charity, which hath made the world miserable and wicked, may, in a great degree, be attributed to the neglect of this great symbol and instrument of charity. The chalice of the sacrament is called by St. Paul, "the cup of blessing:" and if children need every day to beg blessing of their parents, if we also thirst not after this cup of blessing, blessing may be far from us. It is called "the communication of the blood of Christ;" and it is not imaginable, that man should love heaven, or felicity, or his Lord, that desires not perpetually to bathe in that salutary stream, the blood of the holy Jesus, the immaculate Lamb of God.

21. But I find, that the religious fears of men are pretended a colour to excuse this irreligion. Men

[g] Gennadius, c. 54. de Eccles. Dogmat.
[h] Epist. 80. ad Lucinum.
[i] Itaque sicut nobis licet vel jejunare semper, vel semper orare, et diem Dominicum, accepto corpore Domini, indesinenter celebrare gaudentibus, &c.—Idem.
[k] Concil. Lat.

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are wicked, and not prepared, and busy, and full of cares and affairs of the world, and cannot come with due preparation; and therefore better not come at all; nay, men are not ashamed to say, they are at enmity with certain persons, and therefore cannot come. 1. Concerning those persons who are unprepared, because they are in a state of sin or uncharitableness, it is true, they must not come; but this is so far from excusing their not coming, that they increase their sin, and secure misery to themselves, because they do not "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset them," that they may come to the marriage-supper. It is as if we should excuse ourselves from the duties of charity, by saying we are uncharitable; from giving alms, by saying we are covetous; from chastity, by saying we are lascivious. To such men it is just that they graze with the goats, because they refuse to wash their hands, that they may come to the supper of the Lamb. 2. Concerning those that pretend cares and encumbrances of the world, if their affairs make sin and impure affections to stick upon them, they are in the first consideration; but if their office be necessary, just, or charitable, they imitate Martha, and choose the less perfect part, when they neglect the offices of religion for duties economical. 3. But the other sort have more pretence and fairer virtue in their outside. They suppose, like the Persian princes, the seldomer such mysterious rites are seen, the more reverence we shall have, and they the more majesty: and they are fearful lest the frequent attrectation of them should make us less to value the great earnests of our redemption and immortality. It is a pious consideration, but not becoming them; for it cannot be, that the sacrament be undervalued by frequent reception, without the great unworthiness of the persons, so turning God's grace into lightness, and loathing manna: nay, it cannot be without an unworthy communication; for he that receives worthily, increases in the love of God and religion, and the fires of the altar are apt to kindle our sparks into a flame; and when Christ our Lord enters into us, and we grow weary of him, or less fond of his frequent entrance and perpetual cohabitation, it is an infallible sign we have let his enemy in, or are preparing for it. For this is the difference between secular and spiritual objects: Nothing in this world hath any pleasure in it long beyond the hope of it, for the possession and enjoyment is found so empty that we grow weary of it; but whatsoever is spiritual, and in order to God, is less before we have it, but in the fruition it swells our desires, and enlarges the appetite, and makes us more receptive and forward in the entertainment: and therefore those acts of religion that set us forward in time, and backward in affection, do declare that we have not well done our duty, but have communicated unworthily. So that the mending of our fault will answer the objection. Communicate with more devotion, and repent with greater contrition, and walk with more caution, and pray more earnestly, and meditate diligently, and receive with reverence and godly fear; and we shall find our affections increase together with the spiritual emolument; ever remembering that pious and wise advice of St. Ambrose, "Receive every day that which may profit thee every day. But he that is not disposed to receive it every day, is not fit to receive it every year."[1]

22. And if, after all diligence, it be still feared that a man is not well prepared, I must say that it is a scruple, that is, a trouble beyond a doubt and without reason, next to superstition and the dreams of religion; and it is nourished, by imagining that no duty is accepted, if it be less than perfection, and that God is busied in heaven, not only to destroy the wicked and to dash in pieces vessels of dishonour, but to "break a bruised reed" in pieces, and to cast the "smoking flax" into the flames of hell. In opposition to which, we must know, that nothing makes us unprepared but an evil conscience,[m] a state of sin, or a deadly act: but the lesser infirmities of our life, against which we daily strive, and for which we never have any kindness or affections, are not spots in these feasts of charity, but instruments of humility, and stronger invitations to come to those rites, which are ordained for corroboratives against infirmities of the soul, and for the growth of the spirit in the strengths of God. For those other acts of preparation, which precede and accompany the duty, the better and more religiously they are done, they are indeed of more advantage, and honorary to the sacrament; yet he that comes in the state of grace, though he takes the opportunity upon a sudden offer, sins not: and in such indefinite duties, whose degrees are not described, it is good counsel to do our best; but it is ill to make them instruments of scruple, as if it were essentially necessary to do that in the greatest height, which is only intended for advantage, and the fairer accommodation of the mystery. But these very acts, if they be esteemed necessary preparations to the sacrament, are the greatest arguments in the world that it is best to communicate often; because the doing of that, which must suppose the exercise of so many graces, must needs promote the interest of religion, and dispose strongly to habitual graces by our frequent and solemn repetition of the acts. It is necessary that every communicant be first examined concerning the state of his soul, by himself or his superior; and that very scrutiny is in admirable order towards the reformation of such irregularities which time and temptation, negligence and incuriousness, infirmity or malice, have brought into the secret regions of our will and understanding. Now, although this examination be therefore enjoined, that no man should approach to the holy table in the state of ruin and reprobation, and that therefore it is an act, not of direct preparation, but an inquiry whether we be prepared or no; yet this very examination will find so many little irregularities, and so many great imperfections, that it will appear the more necessary to repair the breaches and lesser ruins by such acts of piety and religion; because

[1] De Sacram. lib. v. c. 4

[m] Tempestivum accessum sola conscientiæ integritas facit. —S. CHRYS.

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every communication is intended to be a nearer approach to God, a farther step in grace, a progress towards glory, and an instrument of perfection; and therefore upon the stock of our spiritual interests, for the purchase of a greater hope, and the advantages of a growing charity, ought to be frequently performed. I end with the words of a pious and learned person:[a] "It is a vain fear and an imprudent reverence, that procrastinates and defers going to the Lord that calls them: they deny to go to the fire, pretending they are cold; and refuse physic, because they need it."

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesus, who gavest thyself a sacrifice for our sins, thy body for our spiritual food, thy blood to nourish our spirits, and to quench the flames of hell and lust; who didst so love us, who were thine enemies, that thou desiredst to reconcile us to thee, and becamest all one with us, that we may live the same life, think the same thoughts, love the same love, and be partakers of thy resurrection and immortality; open every window of my soul, that I may be full of light, and may see the excellency of thy love, the merits of thy sacrifice, the bitterness of thy passion, the glories and virtues of the mysterious sacrament. Lord, let me ever hunger and thirst after this instrument of righteousness; let me have no gust or relish of the unsatisfying delights of things below, but let my soul dwell in thee; let me for ever receive thee spiritually, and very frequently communicate with thee sacramentally, and imitate thy virtues piously and strictly, and dwell in the pleasures of thy house eternally. "Lord, thou hast prepared a table for me against them that trouble me:" let that holy sacrament of the eucharist be to me a defence and shield, a nourishment and medicine, life and health, a means of sanctification and spiritual growth; that I, receiving the body of my dearest Lord, may be one with his mystical body, and of the same spirit, united with indissoluble bands of a strong faith, and a holy hope, and a never-failing charity, that from this veil I may pass into the visions of eternal clarity, from eating thy body, to beholding thy face in the glories of thy everlasting kingdom, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening on the Vespers of the Passion.

1. When Jesus had supped and sang a hymn, and prayed, and exhorted and comforted his disciples with a farewell sermon, in which he repeated such of his former precepts which were now apposite to the present condition, and reinforced them with proper and pertinent arguments, he went over the brook Cedron, and entered into a garden, and into the prologue of his passion; choosing that place for his agony and satisfactory pains, in which the first scene of human misery was represented, and where he might best attend the offices of devotion preparatory to his death. Besides this, he therefore departed from the house, that he might give opportunity to his enemies' surprise, and yet not incommodate the good man by whose hospitality they had eaten the paschal lamb; so that he went "like a lamb to the slaughter," to the garden as to a prison,[a] as if, by an agreement with his persecutors, he had expected their arrest, and staid there to prevent their further inquiry.[b] For so great was his desire to pay our ransom, that himself did assist, by a forward patience and active opportunity, towards the persecution: teaching us, that, by an active zeal and a ready spirit, we assist the designs of God's glory, though in our own sufferings and secular infelicities.

2. When he entered the garden, he left his disciples at the entrance of it, calling with him only Peter, James, and John: "he withdrew himself from the rest about a stone's cast, and began to be exceeding heavy." He was not sad till he had called them; for his sorrow began when he pleased: which sorrow he also chose to represent to those three who had seen his transfiguration, the earnest of his future glory, that they might see of how great glory for our sakes he disrobed himself; and that they also might, by the confronting those contradictory accidents, observe, that God uses to dispense his comforts, the irradiations and emissions of his glory, to be preparatives to those sorrows, with which our life must be allayed and seasoned; that none should refuse to partake of the sufferings of Christ, if either they have already felt his comforts, or hope hereafter to wear his crown. And it is not ill observed, that St. Peter, being the chief of the apostles and doctor of the circumcision, St. John, being a virgin, and St. James, the first of the apostles that was martyred, were admitted to Christ's greatest retirements and mysterious secrecies, as being persons of so singular and eminent dispositions, to whom, according to the pious opinion of the church, especial coronets are prepared in heaven, besides the great "crown of righteousness," which in common shall beautify the heads of all the saints; meaning this, that doctors, virgins, and martyrs, shall receive, even for their very state of life and accidental graces, more eminent degrees of accidental glory, like as the sun, reflecting upon a limpid fountain, receives its rays doubled, without any increment of its proper and natural light.

3. "Jesus began to be exceeding sorrowful," to be "sore amazed," and "sad even to death." And because he was now to suffer the pains of our sins, there began his passion whence our sins spring. From an evil heart, and a prevaricating spirit, all our sins arise; and in the spirit of Christ began his sorrow, where he truly felt the full value and demerit of sin, which we think not worthy of a tear or a hearty sigh; but he groaned and fell under the burden. But therefore he took upon him this sadness, that our imperfect sorrow and contrition might

[a] Joan. Gerson, in Magnificat.
[a] Etenim in horto tanquam in carcere.—S. Chrys.
[b] Ut laborem minuat Judæis se quærentibus.—Theophyl.

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be heightened in his example, and accepted in its union and confederacy with his. And Jesus still designed a further mercy for us; for he sanctified the passion of fear, and hallowed natural sadnesses, that we might not think the infelicities of our nature, and the calamities of our temporal condition, to become criminal, so long as they make us not omit a duty, nor dispose us to the election of a crime, nor force us to swallow a temptation, nor yet to exceed the value of their impulsive cause. He that grieves for the loss of friends, and yet had rather lose all the friends he hath than lose the love of God, hath the sorrow of our Lord for his precedent. And he that fears death, and trembles at its approximation, and yet had rather die again than sin once, hath not sinned in his fear; Christ hath hallowed it, and the necessitous condition of his nature is his excuse. But it were highly to be wished, that, in the midst of our caresses and levities of society, in our festivities and triumphal merriments, when we laugh at folly and rejoice in sin, we would remember, that for those very merriments our blessed Lord felt a bitter sorrow; and not one vain and sinful laughter, but cost the holy Jesus a sharp pang and throe of passion.

4. Now that the holy Jesus began to taste the bitter cup, he betook him to his great antidote, which himself, the great Physician of our souls, prescribed to all the world to cure their calamities, and to make them pass from miseries into virtue, that so they may arrive at glory; he prays to his heavenly Father, he kneels down, and not only so, but "falls flat upon the earth," and would, in humility and fervent adoration, have descended low as the centre; he prays with an intension great as his sorrow, and yet with a dereliction so great, and a conformity to the Divine will so ready, as if it had been the most indifferent thing in the world for him to be delivered to death, or from it: for, though his nature did decline death, as that which hath a natural horror and contradiction to the present interest of its preservation; yet when he looked upon it, as his heavenly Father had put it into the order of redemption of the world, it was that "baptism," which he was "straitened till he had accomplished." And now there is not in the world any condition of prayer which is essential to the duty, or any circumstances of advantage to its performance, but were concentred in this one instance; humility of spirit, lowliness of deportment, importunity of desire, a fervent spirit, a lawful matter, resignation to the will of God, great love, the love of a Son to his Father; which appellative was the form of his address; perseverance; he went thrice, and prayed the same prayer; it was not long, and it was so retired as to have the advantages of a sufficient solitude and opportune recollection; for he was withdrawn from the most of his disciples: and yet not so alone as to lose the benefit of communion; for Peter and the two Boanerges were near him. Christ, in this prayer, which was the most fervent that he ever made on earth, intending to transmit to all the world a precedent of devotion to be transcribed and imitated; that we should cast all our cares, and empty them in the bosom of God, being content to receive such a portion of our trouble back again, which he assigns us for our spiritual emolument.

5. The holy Jesus having in a few words poured out torrents of innocent desires, was pleased still to interrupt his prayer, that he might visit his charge, that "little flock," which was presently after to be "scattered:" he was careful of them in the midst of his agonies; they, in his sufferings, were fast asleep. He awakens them, gives them command to "watch and pray," that is, to be vigilant in the custody of their senses, and observant of all accidents, and to pray that they may be strengthened against all incursions of enemies and temptations; and then returns to prayer; and so a third time; his devotion still increasing with his sorrow.[b] And when his prayer was full, and his sorrow come to a great measure, after the third, God sent his "angel to comfort him;" and, by that act of grace, then only expressed, hath taught us to continue our devotions so long as our needs last. It may be, God will not send a comforter till the third time, that is, after a long expectation, and a patient sufferance, and a lasting hope: in the interim God supports us with a secret hand, and, in his own time, will refresh the spirit with the visitations of his angels, with the emissions of comfort from the Spirit, the Comforter. And know this also, that the holy angel, and the Lord of all the angels, stands by every holy person when he prays; and although he draws before his glories the curtain of a cloud, yet in every instant he takes care we shall not perish, and in a just season dissolves the cloud, and makes it to distil in holy dew, and drops sweet as manna, pleasant as nard, and wholesome as the breath of heaven. And such was the consolation which the holy Jesus received by the ministry of the angel, representing to Christ, the Lord of the angels, how necessary it was that he should die for the glory of God;[c] that, in his passion, his justice, wisdom, goodness, power, and mercy, should shine; that, unless he died, all the world should perish, but his blood should obtain their pardon; and that it should open the gates of heaven, repair the ruin of angels, establish a holy church, be productive of innumerable adoptive children to his Father, whom himself should make heirs of glory: and that his passion should soon pass away, his Father hearing and granting his prayer, that "the cup" should pass speedily, though indeed it should pass through him; that it should be attended and followed with a glorious resurrection, with eternal rest and glory of his humanity, with the exaltation of his name, with a supreme dominion over all the world, and that his Father should make him King of kings, and Prince of the catholic church. These, or whatsoever other comforts the

[b] Καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ, ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο, Luke xxii. 44. *Extensiùs orabat*, sic Latinus interpres reddit: Alii plures reddunt per *intensiùs*.

[c] Confortatus est, sed tali confortatione quæ dolorem non minuit, sed magis auxit: confortatus enim est ex fructûs magnitudine, non subtractâ doloris amaritudine.—BEDA, in Lucæ 22.

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angel ministered, were such considerations which the holy Jesus knew, and the angel knew not but by communication from that God, to whose assumed humanity the angel spake; yet he was pleased to receive comfort from his servant, just as God receives glory from his creatures,[d] and as he rejoices in his own works, even because he is good and gracious, and is pleased so to do; and because himself had caused a voluntary sadness to be interposed between the habitual knowledge and the actual consideration of these discourses; and we feel a pleasure, when a friendly hand lays upon our wound the plaster, which ourselves have made, and applies such instruments and considerations of comfort, which we have in notion and an ineffective habit, but cannot reduce them to act, because no man is so apt to be his own comforter: which God hath therefore permitted, that our need should be the occasion of a mutual charity.

6. It was a great season for the angel's coming, because it was a great necessity, which was incumbent upon our Lord; for his sadness and his agony was so great, mingled and compounded of sorrow and zeal, fear and desire, innocent nature and perfect grace, that he "sweat drops" as great as if the blood had started through little undiscerned fontinels, and outrun the streams and rivers of his cross. Euthymius[e] and Theophylact[f] say, that the evangelists use this as a tragical expression of the greatest agony, and an unusual sweat, it being usual to call the tears of the greatest sorrow, "tears of blood." But, from the beginning of the church, it hath been more generally apprehended literally, and that some blood, mingled with the serous substance, issued from his veins in so great abundance, that they moistened the ground, and bedecked his garment, which stood like a new firmament studded with stars, portending an approaching storm. Now "he came from Bozrah with his garments red and bloody." And this agony verified, concerning the holy Jesus, those words of David, "I am poured out like water, my bones are dispersed, my heart, in the midst of my body, is like melting wax," saith Justin Martyr.[g] Venerable Bede saith,[h] that the descending of these drops of blood upon the earth, besides the general purpose, had also a particular relation to the present infirmities of the apostles, that our blessed Lord obtained of his Father, by the merits of those holy drops, mercies and special support for them; and that effusion redeemed them from the present participation of death. And St. Austin meditates, that the body of our Lord, all overspread with drops of bloody sweat, did prefigure the future state of martyrs, and that his body mystical should be clad in a red garment, variegated with the symbols of labour and passion, sweat and blood; by which himself was pleased to purify his church, and present her to God holy and spotless. What collateral designs and tacit significations might be designed by this mysterious sweat, I know not; certainly it was a sad beginning of a most dolorous passion: and such griefs, which have so violent, permanent, and sudden effects upon the body, where is not of a nature symbolical to interior and immaterial causes, are proclaimed by such marks to be high and violent. We have read of some persons that the grief and fear of one night hath put a crown of snow upon their heads, as if the labours of their years had been extracted, and the quintessence drank off, in the passion of that night; but if nature had been capable of a greater or more prodigious impress of passion than a bloody sweat, it must needs have happened in this agony of the holy Jesus, in which he undertook a grief great enough to make up the imperfect contrition of all the saints and to satisfy for the impenitencies of all the world.

7. By this time the traitor, Judas, was arrived at Gethsemane, and being in the vicinage of the garden, Jesus rises from his prayers, and first calls his disciples from their sleep, and, by an irony, seems to give them leave to "sleep on;" but reproves their drowsiness, when danger is so near, and bids them "henceforth take their rest;" meaning, as they could for danger, which now was, indeed, come to the garden doors. But the holy Jesus, that he might appear he undertook the passion with choice and a free election, not only refused to fly, but called his apostles to rise, that they might meet his murderers, who came to him "with swords and staves" as if they were to surprise a prince of armed rebels, whom without force they could not restrain. So, also, might butchers do well to go armed, when they are pleased to be afraid of lambs, by calling them lions. Judas only discovered his Master's retirements, and betrayed him to the opportunities of an armed band; for he could not accuse his master of any word or private action, that might render him obnoxious to suspicion or the law. For such are the rewards of innocence and prudence, that the one secures against sin, the other against suspicion and appearances.

8. The holy Jesus had accustomed to receive every of his disciples after absence with entertainment of a kiss, which was the endearment of persons, and the expression of the oriental civility; and Judas was confident that his Lord would not reject him, whose feet he had washed at the time when he foretold this event, and therefore he agreed to signify him by this sign;[i] and did so beginning war with a kiss, and breaking the peace of his Lord by the symbol of kindness; which because Jesus entertained with much evenness and charitable expressions, calling him "friend," he gave evidence, that if he retained civilities to his

[d] Cùm tristaris, solamen tristium,
Te solantur cives cœlestium.
Res miranda! solus dans gaudium
Rex à cive sumit solatium.—Hondemius Anglus.

[e] In Matt. xxiv. [f] In Lucam xxii.

[g] Justin Mart. Dial. Tryph. Athanas. lib. vi. de Beat. Filii Dei. Aug. lib. vi. c. 5. de Consecr. Evang. Hier. lib. de Trad. Heb. Iren. lib. iv. c. 31. contra hæres. Idem aiunt Dionys. Alex. Aymonius, Epiphan. et alii.

[h] In Luc. lib. vi.

[i] O signum sacrilegum! O placitum fugiendum! Ab osculo incipitur bellum, et per pacis indicium pacis rumpitur sacramentum.—Aug. Serm. 12.

[k] Si honoras, ô dulcis Domine,
Inimicum amici nomine,
Quales erunt, amoris carmine
Qui te canunt et modulamine.—Hondem. de Passione.

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eatest enemies in the very acts of hostility, he .th banquets, and crowns, and sceptres for his ends, that adore him with the kisses of charity, and ve him with the sincerity of an affectionate spirit. it our blessed Lord, besides his essential sweet- ss and serenity of spirit, understood well how eat benefits himself and all the world were to ceive by occasion of that act of Judas: and our eatest enemy does, by accident, to holy persons, e offices of their dearest friends; telling us our ults, without a cloak to cover their deformities, it, out of malice, laying open the circumstances of gravation; doing us affronts, from whence we ve an instrument of our patience; and restraining from scandalous crimes, lest we "become a scorn id reproof to them that hate us." And it is none God's least mercies, that he permits enmities nongst men; that animosities and peevishness may prove more sharply, and correct with more severity id simplicity than the gentle hand of friends, who e apter to bind our wounds up, than to discover em and make them smart; but they are to us an cellent probation, how friends may best do the fices of friends, if they would take the plainness enemies in accusing, and still mingle it with the nderness and good affections of friends. But our essed Lord called Judas "friend," as being the strument of bringing him to glory, and all the orld to pardon, if they would.

9. Jesus himself begins the inquiry, and leads em into their errand, and tells them he was Jesus Nazareth, whom they sought. But this also, hich was an answer so gentle, had in it a strength eater than the eastern wind or the voice of thun- r; for God was in that "still voice," and it struck em down to the ground.[1] And yet they, and so do e, still persist to persecute our Lord, and to pro- ke the eternal God, who can, with the breath of s mouth, with a word, or a sign, or a thought, re- ce us into nothing, or into a worse condition, even a eternal duration of torments, and cohabitation ith a never-ending misery. And if we cannot bear soft answer of the merciful God, how shall we re to provoke the wrath of the Almighty Judge? ut in this instance there was a rare mixture of fects, as there was in Christ of natures; the voice a man, and the power of God. For it is observed the doctors of the primitive ages,[m] that, from the tivity of our Lord to the day of his death, the vinity and humanity did so communicate in effects, at no great action passed, but it was like the sun ining through a cloud, or a beauty with a thin veil awn over it; they gave illustration and testimony each other. The holy Jesus was born a tender id a crying infant; but is adored by the magi as a ing, by the angels as their God. He is circum- sed as a man; but a name is given him, to signify im to be the Saviour of the world. He flies into gypt, like a distressed child, under the conduct of his helpless parents; but as soon as he enters the country, the idols fall down, and confess his true divinity. He is presented in the temple as the son of man; but by Simeon and Anna he is celebrated, with divine praises, for the Messias, the Son of God. He is baptized in Jordan as a sinner; but the Holy Ghost, descending upon him, proclaimed him to be the well-beloved of God. He is hungry in the desert as a man; but sustained his body without meat and drink, for forty days together, by the power of his divinity: there he is tempted of Satan as a weak man, and the angels of light minister unto him as their supreme Lord. And now, a little before his death, when he was to take upon him all the affronts, miseries, and exinanitions of the most miserable, he receives testimonies from above, which are most wonderful; for he was transfigured upon mount Tabor, entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, had the acclamations of the people; when he was dying, he darkened the sun; when he was dead, he opened the sepulchres: when he was fast nailed to the cross, he made the earth to tremble; now, when he suffers himself to be apprehended by a guard of soldiers, he strikes them all to the ground only by replying to their answer: that the words of the prophet might be verified, "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I."[n]

10. The soldiers and servants of the Jews having recovered from their fall, and risen by the permission of Jesus, still persisted in their inquiry after him, who was present, ready and desirous to be sacrificed. He, therefore, permitted himself to be taken, but not his disciples: for he it was that set them their bounds; and he secured his apostles to be witnesses of his suffering and his glories; and this work was the redemption of the world, in which no man could have an active share;[o] he alone was to tread the wine-press; and time enough they should be called to a fellowship of sufferings. But Jesus went to them, and they bound him with cords; and so began our liberty and redemption from slavery, and sin, and cursings, and death. But he was bound faster by bands of his own; his Father's will and mercy, pity of the world, prophecies, and mysteries,[p] and love held him fast: and these cords were as "strong as death;" and the cords, which the soldiers' malice put upon his holy hands, were but symbols and figures, his own compassion and affection were the morals. But yet he undertook this short restraint and condition of a prisoner, that all sorts of persecution and exterior calamities might be hallowed by his susception; and these pungent sorrows should, like bees, sting him, and leave their sting behind, that all the sweetness should remain for us. Some melancholic devotions have, from uncertain stories, added sad circumstances of the first violence done to our Lord; that

[1] Πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιῶται
Αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες ἐπιστόρνυντο κονίῃ,
Πρήνεες, οἰστρηθέντες ἀτευχέϊ λαίλαπι φωνῆς.—NONN.

[m] S. Cyril. S. Athanas. S. Leo, &c.

[n] Isa. lii. 6.

[o] Semovit à periculo discipulos, non ignorans ad se solum certamen illud et opus salutis nostræ pertinere. Regnantis enim, et non servientis, naturæ opus est.—S. CYRIL.

[p] Dominum omnium mysteria, non arma, tenuerunt.—S. AMB. in Lucam.

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they bound him with three cords, and that with so much violence, that they caused blood to start from his tender hands; that they spat then, also, upon him, with a violence and incivility like that which their fathers had used towards Hur, the brother of Aaron, whom they choked with impure spittings into his throat, because he refused to consent to the making a golden calf. These particulars are not transmitted by certain records. Certain it is, they wanted no malice, and now no power; for the Lord had given himself into their hands.

11. St. Peter, seeing his master thus ill-used, asked, "Master, shall we strike with the sword?" and before he had his answer, cut off the ear of Malchus. Two swords there were in Christ's family, and St. Peter bore one; either because he was to kill the paschal lamb, or, according to the custom of the country, to secure them against beasts of prey, which in that region were frequent, and dangerous in the night. But now he used it in an unlawful war; he had no competent authority; it was against the ministers of his lawful prince, and against our prince we must not draw a sword for Christ himself, himself having forbidden us; as his "kingdom is not of this world," so neither were his defences secular: he could have called for many legions of angels for his guard, if he had so pleased; and we read that one angel slew 185,000 armed men in one night; and, therefore, it was a vast power which was at the command of our Lord; and he needs not such low auxiliaries as an army of rebels, or a navy of pirates, to defend his cause: he first lays the foundation of our happiness in his sufferings, and hath ever since supported religion by patience and suffering, and in poverty, and all the circumstances and conjectures of improbable causes. Fighting for religion is certain to destroy charity, but not certain to support faith. St. Peter, therefore, may use his keys, but he is commanded to put up his sword; and he did so; and presently he and all his fellows fairly ran away: and yet that course was much the more christian; for though it had in it much infirmity, yet it had no malice. In the mean time, the Lord was pleased to touch the ear of Malchus, and he cured it; adding to the first instance of power, in throwing them to the ground, an act of miraculous mercy, curing the wounds of an enemy made by a friend. But neither did this pierce their callous and obdurate spirits; but they led him in uncouth ways, and through the brook Cedron,[q] in which it is said the ruder soldiers plunged him, and passed upon him all the affronts and rudenesses which an insolent and cruel multitude could think of, to signify their contempt and their rage. And such is the nature of evil men, who, when they are not softened by the instruments and arguments of grace, are much hardened by them; such being the purpose of God, that either grace shall cure sin, or accidentally increase it; that it shall either pardon it, or bring it to greater punishment; for so I have seen healthful medicines, abused by the incapacities of a healthless body, become fuel to a fever, and increase the distemperature, from indisposition to a sharp disease, and from thence to the margin of the grave. But it was otherwise in Saul, whom Jesus threw to the ground with a more angry sound than these persecutors: but Saul rose a saint, and they persisted devils; and the grace of God distinguished the events.

[q] De torrente in viâ bibet.—Ps. cx. ult.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy Jesus, make me by thy example to conform to the will of that eternal God, who is our Father, merciful and gracious; that I may choose all those accidents, which his providence hath actually disposed to me; that I may know no desires but his commands, and his will; and that in all afflictions I may fly thither for mercy, pardon, and support; and may wait for deliverance in such times and manners, which the Father hath reserved in his own power, and graciously dispenses, according to his infinite wisdom and compassion. Holy Jesus, give me the gift and spirit of prayer; and do thou, by thy gracious intercession, supply my ignorances, and passionate desires, and imperfect choices; procuring and giving to me such returns of favour, which may support my needs, and serve the ends of religion and the Spirit, which thy wisdom chooses, and thy passion hath purchased, and thy grace loves to bestow upon all thy saints and servants. Amen.

II.

Eternal God, sweetest Jesu, who didst receive Judas with the affection of a Saviour, and sufferedst him to kiss thy cheek with the serenity and tranquillity of God; and didst permit the soldiers to bind thee, with patience exemplary to all ages of martyrs; and didst cure the wound of thy enemy, with the charity of a parent, and the tenderness of an infinite pity; O kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, embrace me with the entertainments of a gracious Lord, and let my soul dwell and feast in thee, who art the repository of eternal sweetness and refreshments. Bind me, O Lord, with those bands which tied thee fast, the chains of love; that such holy union may dissolve the cords of vanity, and confine the bold pretensions of usurping passions, and imprison all extravagancies of an impertinent spirit, and lead sin captive to the dominion of grace and sanctified reason; that I also may imitate all the parts of thy holy passion; and may, by thy bands, get my liberty; by thy kiss, enkindle charity; by the touch of thy hand and the breath of thy mouth, have all my wounds cured, and restored to the integrity of a holy penitent, and the purities of innocence; that I may love thee, and please thee, and live with thee for ever, O holy and sweetest Jesu. Amen.

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Considerations upon the Scourging, and other Accidents, happening from the Apprehension till the Crucifixion of Jesus.

1. THE house of Annas stood in the mount Sion, and in the way to the house of Caiaphas; and thither he was led, as to the first stage of their triumph for their surprise of a person so feared and desired; and there a naughty person smote the holy Jesus upon the face, for saying to Annas, that he had made his doctrine public, and that all the people were able to give account of it: to whom the Lamb of God showed as much meekness and patience in his answer, as in his answer to Annas he had showed prudence and modesty. For, now that they had taken Jesus, they wanted a crime to object against him, and therefore were desirous to snatch occasion from his discourses, to which they resolved to tempt him, by questions and affronts: but his answer was general and indefinite, safe and true, enough to acquit his doctrine from suspicions of secret designs, and yet secure against their present snares; for now himself, who always had the "innocence of doves," was to join with it the prudence and wariness of serpents; not to prevent death, (for that he was resolved to suffer,) but that they might be destitute of all appearance of a just cause on his part. Here it was that Judas received his money; and here that holy face, which was designed to be that object, in the beholding of which much of the celestial glory doth consist; that face which the angels stare upon with wonder, like infants at a bright sunbeam, was smitten extrajudicially by an incompetent person, with circumstances of despite, in the presence of a judge, in a full assembly, and none reproved the insolence and the cruelty of the affront: for they resolved to use him as they use wolves and tigers, with all things that may be destructive, violent, and impious: and in this the injury was heightened, because the blow was said to be given by Malchus, an Idumæan slave, and, therefore, a contemptible person;[a] but far more unworthy by his ingratitude, for so he repaid the holy Jesus for working a miracle and healing his ear. But so the scripture was fulfilled; "He shall give his body to the smiters, and his cheeks to the nipper," saith the prophet Isaiah; and, "They shall smite the cheek of the Judge of Israel," saith Micah. And this very circumstance of the passion, Lactantius affirms to have been foretold by the Erythræan sibyl.[b] But no meekness, or indifference, could engage our Lord not to protest his innocence: and though, following his steps, we must walk in the regions of patience, and tranquillity, and admirable toleration of injuries; yet we may represent such defences of ourselves, which, by not resisting the sentence, may testify that our suffering is undeserved: and if our innocence will not preserve our lives, it will advance our title to a better; and every good cause ill judged shall be brought to another tribunal, to receive a just and unerring sentence.

2. Annas, having suffered this unworthy usage towards a person so excellent,[c] sent him away to Caiaphas, who had formerly, in a full council, resolved he should die; yet now, palliating the design with the scheme of a tribunal, they seek out for witnesses, and the witnesses are to seek for allegations; and when they find them, they are to seek for proof, and those proofs were to seek for unity and consent, and nothing was ready for their purposes; but they were forced to use the semblance of a judicial process, that, because they were to make use of Pilate's authority to put him to death, they might persuade Pilate to accept of their examination and conviction without further inquiry. But such had been the excellency, and exemplar piety, and prudence, of the life of Jesus, that, if they pretended against him questions of their law, they were not capital in a Roman court: if they affirmed, that he had moved the people to sedition and affected the kingdom, they saw that all the world would convince them of false testimony. At last, after many attempts, they accused him for a figurative speech, a trope which they could not understand; which, if it had been spoken in a literal sense, and had been acted too, according to the letter, had been so far from a fault, that it would have been a prodigy of power; and it had been easier to raise the temple of Jerusalem, than to raise the temple of his body. In the mean time, the Lamb of God left his cause to defend itself, under the protection of his heavenly Father; not only because himself was determined to die, but because if he had not, those premises could never have inferred it. But this silence of the holy Jesus fulfilled a prophecy, it made his enemies full of murmur and amazement, it made them to see that he despised the accusations, as certain and apparent calumnies; but that himself was fearless of the issue, and, in the sense of morality and mysteries, taught us not to be too apt to excuse ourselves, when the semblance of a fault lies upon us, unless, by some other duty, we are obliged to our defences; since he, who was most innocent, was most silent: and it was expedient that, as the first Adam increased his sin by a vain apology, the silence and sufferance of the second Adam should expiate and reconcile it.[d]

3. But Caiaphas had a reserve, which he knew should do the business in that assembly; he adjured him, by God, to tell him if he "were the Christ." The holy Jesus, being adjured by so sacred a name, would not now refuse an answer, lest it might not consist with that honour which is due to it, and which he always paid, and that he might neither despise the authority of the high priest, nor, upon so solemn occasion, be wanting to that great truth,

[a] Malchus Idumæis missus captivus ab oris.
Vida, Episc. Cremon. lib. ii. Christeidos. Isa. l. 6. Mic. v. 1.

[b] Εἰς ἀνόμων χεῖρας καὶ ἀπίστων ὕστερον ἥξει,
Δώσουσιν τε Θεῷ ῥαπίσματα χερσὶν ἀνάγνοις.
INSTIT. lib. iv. c. 18.

[c] Victor in S. Marc.

[d] Taciturnitas Christi apologiam Adæ absolvit.—S. HIERON. in Marc.

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which he came down to earth to persuade to the world. And, when three such circumstances concur, it is enough to open our mouths, though we let in death. And so did our Lord, confessed himself to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God." And this the high priest was pleased, as the design was laid, to call "blasphemy;" and there they voted him to die. Then it was "the high priest rent his clothes;" the veil of the temple was rent when the passion was finished; the clothes of the priests at the beginning of it: and as that signified the departing of the synagogue, and laying religion open; so did the rending the garments of Caiaphas prophetically signify, that the priesthood should be rent from him, and from the nation.* And thus the personated and theatrical admiration at Jesus became the type of his own punishment, and consigned the nation to deletion: and usually God so dispenses his judgments, that when men personate the tragedies of others, they really act their own.

4. Whilst these things were acting concerning the Lord, a sad accident happened to his servant Peter: for, being engaged in strange and evil company, in the midst of danger, surprised with a question without time to deliberate an answer, to find subterfuges, or to fortify himself, he denied his Lord shamefully, with some boldness at first, and this grew to a licentious confidence, and then to impudence, and denying, with perjury, that he knew not his Lord, who yet was known to him as his own heart, and was dearer than his eyes, and for whom he professed, but a little before, he would die; but did not do so till many years after. But thus he became to us a sad example of human infirmity;† and if the prince of the apostles fell so foully, it is full of pity, but not to be upbraided, if we see the fall of lesser stars. And yet, that we may prevent so great a ruin, we must not mingle with such company, who will provoke or scorn us into sin; and if we do, yet we must stand upon our guard, that a sudden motion do not surprise us: or if we be arrested, yet let us not enter further into our sin, like wild beasts intricating themselves by their impatience. For there are some, who, being ashamed and impatient to have been engaged, take sanctuary in boldness and a shameless abetting it, so running into the darkness of hell to hide their nakedness. But he also, by returning, and rising instantly, became to us a rare example of penitence; and his not lying long in the crime did facilitate this restitution. For the Spirit of God being extinguished by our works of darkness, is like a taper, which if, as soon as the flame is blown out, it be brought to the fire, it sucks light, and, without trouble, is reenkindled; but if it cools into death and stiffness, it requires a longer stay and trouble. The holy Jesus, in the midst of his own sufferings, forgot not his servant's danger, but was pleased to look upon him when the cock crew; and the cock was the preacher, and the look of Jesus was the grace that made the servant effectual: and because he was but newly fallen, and his habitual love of his Master, though interrupted, yet had suffered no natural abatement, he returned, with the swiftness of an eagle, to the embraces and primitive affections of his Lord.

5. By this time suppose sentence given, Caiaphas prejudging all the sanhedrim; for he first declared Jesus to have spoken blasphemy, and the fact to be notorious, and then asked their votes; which whoso then should have denied, must have contested the judgment of the high priest, who, by the favour of the Romans, was advanced, (Valerius Gratus, who was president of Judea, having been his patron,) and his faction potent, and his malice great, and his heart set upon this business; all which inconveniences none of them durst have suffered, unless he had had the confidence greater than of an apostle at that time. But this sentence was but like strong dispositions to an enraged fever; he was only declared apt and worthy for death, they had no power at that time to inflict it; but yet they let loose all the fury of mad-men, and insolency of wounded smarting soldiers: and although, from the time of his being in the house of Annas, till the council met, they had used him with studied indignities; yet now they renewed and doubled the unmercifulness, and their injustice, to so great a height, that their injuries must needs have been greater than his patience, if his patience had been less than infinite. For thus man's redemption grows up, as the load swells which the holy Jesus bare for us; for these were our portion, and we, having turned the flowers of paradise into thistles, should for ever have felt their infelicity, had not Jesus paid the debt. But he bearing them upon his tender body with an even, and excellent, and dispassionate spirit, offered up these beginnings of sufferings to his Father, to obtain pardon even for them that injured him, and for all the world.

6. Judas now, seeing that this matter went further than he intended it, repented of his fact. For although evil persons are, in the progress of their iniquity, invited on by new arguments, and supported by confidence and a careless spirit: yet, when iniquity is come to the height, or so great a proportion, that it is apt to produce despair, or an intolerable condition, then the devil suffers the conscience to thaw and grow tender; but it is the tenderness of a bile, it is soreness rather and a new disease; and either it comes when the time of repentance is past, or leads to some act which shall make the pardon to be impossible: and so it happened here. For Judas, either impatient of the shame or of the sting, was thrust on to despair of pardon, with a violence as hasty and as great as were his needs. And despair is very often used like the bolts and bars of hell gates; it seizes upon them that had entered into the suburbs of eternal death by an habitual sin, and it secures them against all retreat.

* Conscidit vestimenta sua, ostendens turpitudinem suam, et nuditatem animæ, et mysterium manifestans, conscindendum esse sacerdotium vetus.—ORIGEN. Idem ait S. Hier.

† Ὃν τρόπον αἱ σκιαὶ τοῖς σώμασιν ἕπονται, οὕτως αἱ ἁμαρτίαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν.—AGAPET. Diac. Capit. admonit. 69.

Leo Serm. 9. de Pass. Dom. et Euthym. in hunc locum.

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And the devil is forward enough to bring a man to repentance, provided it be too late: and Esau wept bitterly, and repented him; and the five foolish virgins lift up their voice aloud, when the gates were shut; and in hell men shall repent to all eternity. But I consider the very great folly and infelicity of Judas: it was at midnight he received his money in the house of Annas, betimes in that morning he repented his bargain; he threw the money back again, but his sin stuck close, and, it is thought, to a sad eternity. Such is the purchase of treason, and the reward of covetousness; it is cheap in its offers, momentary in its possession, unsatisfying in the fruition, uncertain in the stay, sudden in its departure, horrid in the remembrance, and a ruin, a certain and miserable ruin, is in the event. When Judas came in that sad condition, and told his miserable story to them that set him on work, they let him go away unpitied; he had served their ends in betraying his Lord; and those that hire such servants, use to leave them in the disaster, to shame and to sorrow: and so did the priests, but took the money, and refused to put it into the treasury, because it was "the price of blood;"[g] but they made no scruple to take it from the treasury to buy that blood. Any thing seems lawful, that serves the ends of ambitious and bloody persons, and then they are scrupulous in their cases of conscience, when nothing of interest does intervene: for evil men make religion the servant of interest, and sometimes weak men think, that it is the fault of the religion, and suspect that all of it is a design, because many great politics make it so. The end of the tragedy was, that Judas died with an ignoble death, marked with the circumstances of a horrid judgment,[h] and perished by the most infamous hands in the world, that is, by his own. Which, if it be confronted against the excellent spirit of St. Peter, who did an act as contradictory to his honour, and the grace of God, as could be easily imagined; yet, taking sanctuary in the arms of his Lord, he lodged in his heart for ever, and became an example to all the world, of the excellency of the Divine mercy, and the efficacy of a holy hope, and a hearty, timely, and an operative repentance.

7. But now all things were ready for the purpose, the high priest and all his council go, along with the holy Jesus, to the house of Pilate, hoping he would verify their sentence, and bring it to execution, that they might once be rid of their fears, and enjoy their sin and their reputation quietly. St. Basil affirms, that the high priest caused the holy Jesus to be led with a cord about his neck,[i] and, in memory of that, the priests, for many ages, wore a stole about theirs. But the Jews did it according to the custom of the nation, to signify he was condemned to death: they desired Pilate that he would crucify him, they having found him worthy. And when Pilate inquired into the particulars, they gave him a general and indefinite answer; "If he were not guilty, we would not have brought him unto thee:" they intended not to make Pilate judge of the cause, but executor of their cruelty. But Pilate had not learned to be guided by an implicit faith of such persons, which he knew to be malicious and violent; and, therefore, still called for instances and arguments of their accusation. And that all the world might see with how great unworthiness they prosecuted the Messias, they chiefly there accused him of such crimes, upon which themselves condemned him not, and which they knew to be false, but yet likely to move Pilate, if he had been passionate or inconsiderate in his sentences; "He offered to make himself a king." This discourse happened at the entry of the prætorium; for the Jews, who had no conscience of killing the King of heaven, made a conscience of the external customs and ceremonies of their law, which had in them no interior sanctity, which were apt to separate them from the nations, and remark them with characters of religion and abstraction: it would defile them to go to a Roman forum, where a capital action was to be judged; and yet the effusion of the best blood in the world was not esteemed against their religion: so violent and blind is the spirit of malice, which turns humanity into cruelty, wisdom into craft, diligence into subornation, and religion into superstition.

8. Two other articles they alleged against him: but the first concerned not Pilate, and the second was involved in the third, and, therefore, he chose to examine him upon this only, of his being "a King." To which the holy Jesus answered, that it is true, he was a King indeed, but "not of this world;" his throne is heaven, the angels are his courtiers, and the whole creation are his subjects: his regiment is spiritual, his judicatories are the courts of conscience and church-tribunals, and at dooms-day the clouds: the tribute which he demands are, conformity to his laws, faith, hope, and charity; no other gabels but the duties of a holy spirit, and the expresses of a religious worship, and obedient will, and a consenting understanding. And in all this, Pilate thought the interest of Cæsar was not invaded. For certain it is, the discipline of Jesus confirmed it much, and supported it by the strongest pillars. And here Pilate saw how impertinent and malicious their accusation was: and we, who declaim against the unjust proceedings of the Jews against our dearest Lord, should do well to take care that we, in accusing any of our brethren, either with malicious purpose, or with an uncharitable circumstance, do not commit the same fault which, in them, we so hate and accuse. Let no man speak any thing of his neighbour but what is true: and yet, if the truth be heightened by the biting rhetoric of a satirical spirit, extended and drawn forth in circumstances and arts of aggravation, the truth

[g] Indè sacerdotes, pretium quòd sanguinis esset,
Illicitum fantes adytis jam condere templi,
Quod dare tum licitum, dum sanguis distraheretur,
Credebant ———
JUVENCUS. Hist. Evang. lib. iv.

[h] Non potuit Judas pejore manu perire, et quamvis sceleratum occiderit, non debuit tamen.—S. AUGUST. de Civit. Dei, lib. i. c. 17.

[i] In Mystagog. Eccles. Author. Com. in Marc. apud S. Hieron.

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becomes a load to the guilty person, is a prejudice to the sentence of the judge, and hath not so much as the excuse of zeal, much less the charity of christianity. Sufficient to every man is the plain story of his crime; and to excuse as much of it as we can, would better become us, who perish unless we be excused for infinite irregularities. But if we add this also, that we accuse our brethren before them that may amend them, and reform their error; if we pity their persons, and do not hate them; if we seek nothing of their disgrace, and make not their shame public, but when the public is necessarily concerned, or the state of the man's sin requires it; then our accusations are charitable; but if they be not, all such accusations are accepted by Christ with as much displeasure, in proportion to the degree of the malice, and the proper effect, as was this accusation of his own person.

9. But Pilate, having pronounced Jesus innocent, and perceiving he was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, as being a more competent person to determine concerning one of his own jurisdiction. Herod was glad at the honour done to him, and the person brought him, being now desirous to see some miracle done before him. But the holy Jesus spake not one word there, nor did any sign; so to reprove the sottish carelessness of Herod, who, living in the place of Jesus's abode, never had seen his person, nor heard his sermons. And if we neglect the opportunities of grace, and refuse to hear the voice of Christ in the time of mercy and Divine appointment, we may arrive at that state of misery, in which Christ will refuse to speak one word of comfort to us; and the homilies of the gospel shall be dead letters, and the spirit not at all refreshed, nor the understanding instructed, nor the affections moved, nor the will determined; but because we have, during all our time, stopped our ears, in his time God will stop his mouth, and shut up the springs of grace, that we shall receive no refreshment, or instruction, or pardon, or felicity. Jesus suffered not himself to be moved at the pertinacious accusations of the Jews, nor the desires of the tyrant, but persevered in silence, till Herod and his servants despised him, and dismissed him. For so it became our High Priest, who was to sanctify all our sufferings, to consecrate affronts and scorn, that we may learn to endure contempt, and to suffer ourselves, in a religious cause, to be despised; and when it happens in any other, to remember that we have our dearest Lord for a precedent, of bearing it with admirable simplicity and equanimity of deportment: and it is a mighty stock of self-love that dwells in our spirits, which makes us, of all afflictions, most impatient of this. But Jesus endured this despite, and suffered this to be added, that he was exposed in scorn to the boys of the streets. For Herod caused him to be arrayed in white, sent him out to be scorned by the people and hooted at by idle persons, and so remitted him to Pilate. And since that accident to our Lord, the church hath not indecently chosen to clothe her priests with albs, or white garments; and it is a symbolical intimation and representment of that part of the passion and affront, which Herod passed upon the holy Jesus: and this is so far from deserving a reproof, that it were to be wished all the children of the church would imitate all those graces, which Christ exercised when he wore that garment,[k] which she hath taken up in ceremony and thankful memory; that is, in all their actions and sufferings be so estranged from secular arts and mixtures of the world, so intent upon religion, and active in all its interests, so indifferent to all acts of providence, so equal in all chances, so patient of every accident, so charitable to enemies, and so undetermined by exterior events, that nothing may draw us forth from the severities of our religion, or entice us from the retirements of a recollected, and sober, and patient spirit, or make us to depart from the courtesies of piety, though, for such adhesion and pursuit, we be esteemed fools, or ignorant, or contemptible.

10. When Pilate had received the holy Jesus, and found that Herod had sent him back uncondemned, he attempted to rescue him from their malice, by making him a donative and a freed man, at the petition of the people. But they preferred a murderer and a rebel, Barabbas, before him; for themselves being rebels against the King of heaven, loved to acquit persons criminal in the same kind of sin, rather than their Lord, against whom they took up all the arms which they could receive from violence and perfect malice, "desiring to have him crucified, who raised the dead, and to have the other released, who destroyed the living."[l] And when Pilate saw they were set upon it, he consented, and delivered him first to be scourged;[m] which the soldiers executed with violence and unrelenting hands, opening his virginal body to nakedness, and tearing his tender flesh till the pavement was purpled with a shower of holy blood. It is reported in the ecclesiastical story, that when St. Agnes and St. Barbara, holy virgins and martyrs, were stripped naked to execution, God, pitying their great shame and trouble to have their nakedness discovered, made for them a veil of light, and sent them to a modest and desired death. But the holy Jesus, who chose all sorts of shame and confusion, that, by a fulness of suffering, he might expiate his Father's anger, and that he might consecrate to our sufferance all kind of affront and passion, endured even the shame of nakedness at the time of his scourging, suffering himself to be divested of his robes, that we might be clothed with that stole he put off: for therefore he took on him the state of sinning Adam, and became naked, that we might first be clothed with righteousness, and then with immortality.

[k] Θεῷ δὲ θύε διὰ τέλους δίκαιος ὤν,
Μὴ λαμπρὸς ὢν ταῖς χλαμύσιν, ὡς τῇ καρδίᾳ.—MENAND.

[l] S. Aug. Tract. 15. in Joann.

[m] Vinctus in his Dominus stetit ædibus, atque columnis
Annexus tergum dedit ut servile flagellis:
Perstat adhuc templumque gerit veneranda columna.
Nosque decet cunctis immunes vivere flagris.
PRUDENT.

Cernitur in toto corpore sculptus amor.
NAZ. in Chr. Patien.

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11. After they had scourged him without remorse, they "clothed him with purple, and crowned him with thorns," and "put a cane in his hand for a sceptre," and "bowed their knees before him," and "saluted him" with mockery, with a "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they "beat him," and "spat upon him;" and then Pilate brought him forth, and showed this sad spectacle to the people, hoping this might move them to compassion, who never loved to see a man prosperous, and are always troubled to see the same man in misery. But the earth which was cursed for Adam's sake, and was sowed with thorns and thistles, produced the full harvest of them, and the second Adam gathered them all, and made garlands of them, as ensigns of his victory, which he was now in pursuit of, against sin, the grave, and hell. And we also may make our thorns, which are in themselves pungent and dolorous, to be a crown, if we bear them patiently, and unite them to Christ's passion, and offer them to his honour, and bear them in his cause, and rejoice in them for his sake. And indeed, after such a grove of thorns growing upon the head of our Lord, to see one of Christ's members soft, delicate, and effeminate, is a great indecency, next to this of seeing the Jews use the King of glory with the greatest reproach and infamy.

12. But nothing prevailing, nor the innocence of Jesus, nor his immunity from the sentence of Herod, nor the industry and diligence of Pilate, nor the misery, nor the sight of the afflicted Lamb of God, at last (for so God decreed to permit it, and Christ to suffer it) Pilate gave sentence of death upon him, having first washed his hands; of which God served his end, to declare the innocence of his Son, of which, in this whole process, he was most curious, and suffered not the least probability to adhere to him; yet Pilate served no end of his, nor preserved any thing of his innocence. He that rails upon a prince, and cries, Saving your honour, you are a tyrant; and he that strikes a man upon the face, and cries him mercy, and undoes him, and says it was in jest, does just like that person that sins against God, and thinks to be excused by saying it was against his conscience; that is washing our hands when they are stained in blood, as if a ceremony of purification were enough to cleanse a soul from the stains of a spiritual impurity. So some refuse not to take any oath in times of persecution, and say it obliges not, because it was forced, and done against their wills; as if the doing of it were washed off by protesting against it, whereas the protesting against it declares me criminal, if I rather choose not death than that which I profess to be a sin. But all the persons which co-operated in this death were in this life consigned to a fearful judgment after it. The Jews took the blood (which Pilate seemed to wash off) "upon themselves and their children," and the blood of this Paschal Lamb stuck upon their forehead, and marked them, not to escape, but to fall under the sword of the destroying angel, and they perished either by a more hasty death, or shortly after, in the extirpation and miserable ruin of their nation. And Pilate, who had a less share in the crime, yet had a black character of a secular judgment; for, not long after, he was, by Vitellius, the president of Syria, sent to Rome, to answer to the crimes objected against him by the Jews, whom to please he had done so much violence to his conscience; and, by Cæsar's sentence, he was banished to Vienna, deprived of all his honours, where he lived ingloriously, till, by impatience of his calamity, he killed himself with his own hand. And thus the blood of Jesus, shed for the salvation of the world, became to them a curse; and that which purifies the saints stuck to them that shed it, and mingled it not with the tears of repentance, to be a leprosy loathsome and incurable. So manna turns to worms, and the wine of angels to vinegar and lees, when it is received into impure vessels, or tasted by wanton palates; and the sun himself produces rats and serpents, when it reflects upon the dirt of Nilus.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and immaculate Lamb of God, who wert pleased to suffer shame and sorrow, to be brought before tribunals, to be accused maliciously, betrayed treacherously, condemned unjustly, and scourged most rudely, suffering the most severe and most unhandsome inflictions which could be procured by potent, subtle, and extremest malice, and didst choose this out of love greater than the love of mothers, more affectionate than the tears of joy and pity dropped from the eyes of most passionate women, by these fontinels of blood issuing forth life, and health, and pardon upon all thine enemies; teach me to apprehend the baseness of sin, in proportion to the greatest of those calamities which my sin made it necessary for thee to suffer, that I may hate the cause of thy sufferings, and adore thy mercy, and imitate thy charity, and copy out thy patience and humility, and love thy person to the uttermost extent and degrees of my affections. Lord, what am I, that the eternal Son of God should suffer one stripe for me? But thy love is infinite; and how great a misery is it to provoke by sin so great a mercy, and despise so miraculous a goodness, and to do fresh despite to the Son of God! But our sins are innumerable, and our infirmities are mighty. Dearest Jesu, pity me, for I am accused by my own conscience, and am found guilty; I am stripped naked of my innocence, and bound fast by lust, and tormented with stripes and wounds of enraged appetites. But let thy innocence excuse me, the robes of thy righteousness clothe me, thy bondage set me free, and thy stripes heal me; that thou being my Advocate, my Physician, my Patron, and my Lord, I may be adopted into the union of thy merits, and partake of the efficacy of thy sufferings, and be crowned as thou art, having my sins changed to virtues, and my thorns to rays of glory under thee, our Head, in the participations of eternity, O holy and immaculate Lamb of God. Amen.

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DISCOURSE XX.

Of Death, and the due Manner of Preparation to it.

1. THE Holy Spirit of God hath in Scripture revealed to us but one way of preparing to death, and that is, by a holy life; and there is nothing in all the book of life concerning this exercise of address to death, but such advices which suppose the dying person in a state of grace. St. James indeed counsels,[a] that in sickness we should send for the ministers ecclesiastical, and that "they pray over us," and that we "confess our sins," and "they shall be forgiven;" that is, those prayers are of great efficacy for the removing the sickness, and taking off that punishment of sin, and healing them in a certain degree, according to the efficacy of the ministry, and the dispositions or capacities of the sick person. But we must know, that oftentimes universal effects are attributed to partial causes; because, by the analogy of Scripture, we are taught, that all the body of holy actions and ministries are to unite in production of the event, and that, without that aduna-tion, one thing alone cannot operate; but because no one alone does the work, but by an united power, therefore indefinitely the effect is ascribed sometimes to one, sometimes to another, meaning, that one as much as the other, that is, all together, are to work the pardon and the grace. But the doctrine of preparation to death, we are clearest taught in the parable of the ten virgins.[b] Those who were wise stood waiting for the coming of the bridegroom, their lamps burning; only when the lord was at hand, at the notice of his coming published, they trimmed their lamps, and they, so disposed, went forth and met him, and entered with him into his interior and eternal joys. They whose lamps did not stand ready beforehand, expecting the uncertain hour, were shut forth, and bound in darkness. "Watch, therefore," so our Lord applies and expounds the parable, "for ye know not the day, nor the hour, of the coming of the Son of man."[c] Whenever the arrest of death seizes us, unless before that notice we had oil in our vessels, that is, grace in our hearts, habitual grace, (for nothing else can reside or dwell there, an act cannot inhabit or be in a vessel,) it is too late to make preparation. But they who have it may and must prepare, that is, they must stir the fire, trim the vessel, make it more actual in its exercise and productions, full of ornament, advantages, and degrees. And that is all we know from Scripture concerning preparation.

2. And indeed, since all our life we are dying, and this minute in which I now write, death divides with me, and hath got the surer part and more certain possession, it is but reasonable, that we should always be doing the offices of preparation.[d] If to-day we were not dying and passing on to our grave, then we might with more safety defer our work till the morrow: but as fuel in a furnace, in every degree of its heat and reception of the flame, is converting into fire and ashes, and the disposing it to the last mutation is the same work with the last instance of its change; so is the age of every day a beginning of death, and the night composing us to sleep bids us to go to our lesser rest; because that night, which is the end of the preceding day, is but a lesser death; and whereas now we have died so many days, the last day of our life is but the dying so many more, and when that last day of dying will come we know not. There is nothing then added but the circumstance of sickness, which also happens many times before; only men are pleased to call that death which is the end of dying, when we cease to die any more: and, therefore, to put off our preparation till that which we call death, is to put off the work of all our life, till the time comes in which it is to cease and determine.

3. But to accelerate our early endeavour, (besides what hath been formerly considered upon the proper grounds of repentance,) I here re-enforce the consideration of death in such circumstances which are apt to engage us upon an early industry. 1. I consider that no man is sure that he shall not die suddenly;[e] and therefore, if heaven be worth securing, it were fit that we should reckon every day the vespers of death, and therefore that, according to the usual rites of religion, it be begun and spent with religious offices: and let us consider, that those many persons who are remarked in history to have died suddenly, either were happy by an early piety, or miserable by a sudden death. And if uncertainty of condition be an abatement of felicity, and spoils the good we possess, no man can be happy but he that hath lived well, that is, who hath secured his condition by an habitual and living piety. For since God hath not told us we shall not die suddenly, is it not certain he intended we should prepare for sudden death, as well as against death clothed in any other circumstances? Fabius, surnamed Pictor,[f] was choked with a hair in a mess of milk, Anacreon with a raisin, Cardinal

[a] James v. 14, &c.
[b] Matt. xxv. Ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ. —ÆSCHYL. Agamemn.
[c] Matt. xxv. 13.
[d] ——— festinat decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio ———
——— Τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν
Ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον;
Τὸ μόρσιμον γὰρ τὸν τ' ἐλεύθερον μένει,
Καὶ τὸν πρὸς ἄλλης δεσποτούμενον χερός.
ÆSCHYL. Agam.

Cras hoc fiet, idem cras fiet. Quid quasi magnum
Nempe diem donas? Sed cùm lux altera venit,
Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus; ecce aliud cras
Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultrà.
PERS. Sat. 5.

[e] Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis
Cautum est in horas. Navita Bosporum
Pœnus perhorrescit, neque ultrà
Cæca timet aliunde fata:
Miles sagittas et celerem fugam
Parthi; catenas Parthus et Italum
Robur. Sed improvisa lethi
Vis rapuit, rapietque gentes.—HOR. lib. ii. Od. 13
[f] Cicero in Brut.

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Colonna with figs crusted with ice, Adrian the Fourth with a fly, Drusus Pompeius with a pear, Domitius Afer, Quintilian's tutor, with a full cup, Casimire the Second, king of Polonia,[g] with a little draught of wine, Amurath with a full goblet, Tarquinius Priscus with a fish-bone. For as soon as a man is born, that which in nature only remains to him, is to die;[h] and if we differ in the way or time of our abode, or the manner of our exit, yet we are even at last: and since it is not determined by a natural cause which way we shall go, or at what age a wise man will suppose himself always upon his death-bed; and such supposition is like making of his will, he is not the nearer death for doing it, but he is the readier for it when it comes.

4. St. Jerome said well, "He deserves not the name of a christian, who will live in that state of life in which he will not die." And indeed it is a great venture to be in an evil state of life, because every minute of it hath a danger; and therefore a succession of actions, in every one of which he may as well perish as escape, is a boldness that hath no mixture of wisdom or probable venture. How many persons have died in the midst of an act of sport, or at a merry meeting! Grimoaldus, a Lombard king, died with shooting of a pigeon; Thales, the Milesian, in the theatre; Lucia, the sister of Aurelius the emperor, playing with her little son, was wounded in her breast with a needle, and died; Benno, bishop of Adelburg, with great ceremony and joy consecrating St. Michael's church, was crowded to death by the people; so was the duke of Saxony, at the inauguration of Albert the First.[i] The great lawyer, Baldus, playing with a little dog, was bitten upon the lip, instantly grew mad, and perished; Charles the Eighth of France, seeing certain gentlemen playing at tenniscourt, swooned, and recovered not; Henry the Second was killed running at tilt; Ludovicus Borgia with riding the great horse; and the old Syracusan, Archimedes, was slain by a rude soldier as he was making diagrams in the sand, which was his greatest pleasure. How many men have died laughing, or in the ecstasies of a great joy! Philippides the comedian, and Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, died with joy at the news of a victory.[k] Diagoras of Rhodes, and Chilo the philosopher, expired in the embraces of their sons crowned with an Olympic laurel.[l] Polycrita Naxia, being saluted the saviouress of her country;[m] Marcus Juventius, when the senate decreed him honours; the emperor Conrad the Second, when he triumphed after the conquest of Italy; had a joy bigger than their heart, and their fancy swelled it, till they burst, and died.[n] Death can enter in at any door: Philistion of Nice died with excessive laughter; so did the poet Philemon, being provoked to it only by seeing an ass eat figs. And the number of persons who have been found suddenly dead in their beds is so great,[o] that, as it engages many to a more certain and regular devotion for their compline, so it were well it were pursued to the utmost intention of God; that is, that all the parts of religion should, with zeal and assiduity, be entertained and finished, that, as it becomes wise men, we never be surprised with that we are sure will some time or other happen. A great general in Italy, at the sudden death of Alfonsus of Ferrara, and Ludovico Corbinelli, at the sight of the sad accident upon Henry the Second of France now mentioned, turned religious, and they did what God intended in those deaths. It concerns us to be curious of single actions, because, even in those shorter periods, we may expire and find our graves. But if the state of life be contradictory to our hopes of heaven, it is like affronting of a cannon before a beleaguered town a month together; it is a contempt of safety, and a rendering all reason useless and unprofitable: but he only is wise, who, having made death familiar to him by expectation and daily apprehension, does at all instants go forth to meet it. The wise virgins "went forth to meet the bridegroom," for they "were ready." Excellent, therefore, is the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Use physic or ever thou be sick. Before judgment examine thyself, and in the day of visitation thou shalt find mercy. Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins show repentance. Let nothing hinder thee to pay thy vows in due time, and defer not until death to be justified."[p]

5. Secondly: I consider, that it often happens, that, in those few days of our last visitation, which many men design for their preparation and repentance, God hath expressed by an exterior accident, that those persons have deceived themselves and neglected their own salvation. St. Gregory[q] reports of Chrysaurius, a gentleman in the province of Valeria, rich, vicious, and witty, lascivious, covetous, and proud, that, being cast upon his death-bed, he fancied he saw evil spirits coming to arrest him and drag him to hell. He fell into great agony and trouble, shrieked out, called for his son, who was a very religious person, flattered him, as willing to have been rescued by any thing: but perceiving his danger increase, and grown desperate, he called loud with repeated clamours, "Give me respite but till the morrow;" and with those words he died, there being "no place left for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" and groans. The same was the case of a drunken monk, whom Venerable Bede mentions.[r] Upon his death-bed he seemed to see hell opened, and a place assigned him near to Caiaphas, and those who crucified our dearest Lord. The religious persons that stood about his bed called on him to repent of his sins, to

[g] Mart. Crom. lib. vi. Volaterran. lib. iv. c. 22.

[h] Cui nasci contigit, mori restat; intervallis distinguimur, exitu æquamur.—QUINTIL.

Divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho,
Nil interest, an pauper et infimâ
De gente, sub dio morêris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
Omnes eodem cogimur —— HOR. lib. ii. Od. 3.

Βιότης μὲν γὰρ χρόνος ἐστὶ βραχύς· Κρυφθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ γῆς κεῖται ξυητὸς τὸν πάντα χρόνον.

[i] Crantzius, lib. iii. c. 51. Matthiol. in Dioscor.
[k] Plin. lib. vii. c. 53. [l] Cicer. l. Tusc.
[m] Plut. et Gel. de Illust. Mulier. [n] Cuspin.
[o] Lotus nobiscum est, hilaris cœnavit, et idem inventus manè est mortuus Andragoras.—MART. lib. vi.
[p] Ecclus. xviii. 19, &c. [q] Homil. xii. in Evang.
[r] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. v. c. 15.

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implore the mercies of God, and to trust in Christ: but he answered, with reason enough, "This is no time to change my life; the sentence is passed upon me, and it is too late." And it is very considerable and sad which Petrus Damianus tells of Gunizo,[s] a factious and ambitious person, to whom, it is said, the tempter gave notice of his approaching death: but when any man preached repentance to him, out of a strange incuriousness, or the spirit of reprobation, he seemed like a dead and unconcerned person; in all other discourses he was awake, and apt to answer. For God hath shut up the gates of mercy, that no streams should issue forth to quench the flames of hell; or else had shut up the gates of reception and entertainment, that it should not enter: either God denies to give them pardon when they call, or denies to them a power to call; they either cannot pray, or God will not answer. Now, since these stories are related by men, learned, pious, and eminent in their generations, and because they served no design but the ends of piety, and have in them nothing dissonant from revelation or the frequent events of Providence, we may upon their stock consider, that God's judgments and visible marks being set upon a state of life, although they happen but seldom in the instances, yet they are of universal purpose and signification. Upon all murderers God hath not thrown a thunderbolt, nor broken all sacrilegious persons upon the wheel of an inconstant and ebbing estate, nor spoken to every oppressor from heaven in a voice of thunder, nor cut off all rebels in the first attempts of insurrection: but because he hath done so to some, we are to look upon those judgments as Divine accents, and voices of God; threatening all the same crimes with the like events, and with the ruins of eternity. For though God does not always make the same prologues to death, yet by these few accidents happening to single persons, we are to understand his purposes concerning all in the same condition; it was not the person, so much as the estate, which God then remarked with so visible characters of his displeasure.

6. And it seems to me a wonder, that since, from all the records of Scripture,[t] urging the uncertainty of the day of death, the horror of the day of judgment, the severity of God, the dissolution of the world, the certainty of our account; still, from all these premises, the Spirit of God makes no other inference, but that we "watch," and "stand in a readiness;" that we "live in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that there is no one word concerning any other manner of an essentially necessary preparation, none but this; yet that there are doctrines commenced, and rules prescribed, and offices set down, and suppletories invented by curates of souls, how to prepare a vicious person, and, upon his death-bed, to reconcile him to the hopes and promises of heaven. Concerning which, I desire that every person would but inquire,[u] where any one promise is recorded in Scripture concerning such addresses, and what articles Christ hath drawn up between his Father and us, concerning a preparation begun upon our death-bed: and if he shall find none, (as, most certainly, from Genesis to the Revelation, there is not a word concerning it, but very much against it,) let him first build his hopes upon this proposition, that "a holy life is the only preparation to a happy death;" and then we can, without danger, proceed to some other considerations.

7. When a good man, or a person concerning whom it is not certain he hath lived in habitual vices, comes to die, there are but two general ways of intercourse with him; the one to keep him from new sins, the other to make some emendations of the old; the one to fortify him against special weaknesses and proper temptations of that estate, and the other to trim his lamp; that by excellent actions he may adorn his spirit, making up the omissions of his life, and supplying the imperfections of his estate; that his soul may return into the hands of its Creator as pure as it can, every degree of perfection being an advantage so great, as that the loss of every the least portion of it cannot be recompensed with all the good of this world. Concerning the first; the temptations proper to this estate are, either weakness in faith, despair, or presumption: for whatsoever is besides these, as it is the common infelicity of all the several states of life, so they are oftentimes arguments of an ill condition, of immortification of vicious habits, and that he comes not to this combat well prepared; such as are, covetousness, unwillingness to make restitution, remanent affections to his former vices, an unresigned spirit, and the like.

8. In the ecclesiastical story, we find many dying persons mentioned, who have been very much afflicted with some doubts concerning an article of faith. St. Gregory,[x] in an epistle he wrote to St. Austin, instances, in the temptation which Eusebius suffered upon his death-bed. And, although sometimes the devil chooses an article that is not proper to that state, knowing that every such doubt is well enough for his purpose, because of the incapacity of the person to suffer long disputes, and of the jealousy and suspicion of a dying and weak man, fearing lest every thing should cozen him; yet it is commonly instanced in the article of the resurrection, or the state of separation or reunion. And it seems to some persons incredible, that, from a bed of sickness, a state of misery, a cloud of ignorance, a load of passions, a man should enter into the condition of a perfect understanding, great joy, and an intellectual life, a conversation with angels, a fruition of God; the change is greater than his reason; and his faith being, in conclusion, tottering like the ark, and ready to fall, seems a pillar as unsafe and unable to rely on as a bank of turf in an earthquake. Against this, a general remedy is prescribed by spiritual persons; that the sick man should apprehend all changes of persuasion, which happened to

[s] Biblioth. Ss. Pp. tom. iii.

[t] Matt. xxv. 13. and xxiv. 42. Mark xiii. 33. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

[u] ——— tecum priùs ergò voluta
Hæc animo ante tubas: galeatum serò duelli
Pœnitet ——— JUVENAL. Sat. 1.

[x] De Præconio S. Hieron.

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him in his sickness, contradictory to those assents, which in his clearest use of reason he had, to be temptations and arts of the devil. And he hath reason so to think, when he remembers how many comforts of the Spirit of God, what joys of religion, what support, what assistances, what strengths he had, in the whole course of his former life, upon the stock of faith, and interest of the doctrine of christianity. And since the disbelieving the promises evangelical, at that time, can have no end of advantage, and that all wise men tell him it may have an end to make him lose the title to them, and do him infinite disadvantage;[y] upon the stock of interest and prudence, he must reject such fears, which cannot help him, but may ruin him. For all the works of grace which he did, upon the hopes of God, and the stock of the Divine revelations, (if he fails in his hold upon them,) are all rendered unprofitable. And it is certain, if there be no such thing as immortality and resurrection, he shall lose nothing for believing there is; but if there be, they are lost to him for not believing it.

9. But this is also to be cured by proper arguments. And there is no christian man but hath within him, and carries about him, demonstrations of the possibility and great instances of the credibility of those great changes, which these tempted persons have no reason to distrust, but because they think them too great and too good to be true. And here, not only the consideration of the Divine power, and his eternal goodness, is a proper antidote, but also the observation of what we have already received from God. To be raised from nothing to something, is a mutation not less than infinite; and from that which we were, in our first conception, to pass into so perfect and curious bodies, and to become discursive, sensible, passionate, and reasonable, and next to angels, is a greater change, than from this state to pass into that excellency and perfection of it, which we expect as the melioration and improvement of the present: for this is but a mutation of degrees, that of substance: this is more sensible, because we have perception in both states; that is of greater distance, because in the first term we were so far distant from what we are, that we could not perceive what then we were, much less desire to be what we now perceive: and yet God did that for us, unasked, without any obligation on his part, or merit on ours; much rather, then, may we be confident of this alteration of accidents and degrees, because God hath obliged himself by promise; he hath disposed us to it by qualities, actions, and habits, which are to the state of glory as infancy is to manhood, as elements are to excellent discourses, as blossoms are to ripe fruits. And he that hath wrought miracles for us, preserved us in dangers, done strange acts of providence, sent his Son to take our nature, made a Virgin to bear a son, and God to become man, and two natures to be one individual person, and all in order to this end, of which we doubt, hath given us so many arguments of credibility, that, if he had done any more, it would not have been left in our choice to believe or not believe; and then, much of the excellency of our faith would have been lost. Add to this, that we are not tempted to disbelieve the Roman story, or that Virgil's Æneids were writ by him, or that we ourselves are descended of such parents; because these things are not only transmitted to us by such testimony, which we have no reason to distrust, but because the tempter cannot serve any end upon us by producing such doubts in us: and, therefore, since we have greater testimony for every article of faith, and to believe it is of so much concernment to us, we may well suspect it to be an artifice of the devil to rob us of our reward; this proceeding of his being of the same nature with all his other temptations, which in our lifetime, like fiery darts, he threw into our face, to despoil us of our glory, and blot out the image of God imprinted on us.

10. Secondly:[z] If the devil tempts the sick person to despair, he who is by God appointed to minister a word of comfort, must fortify his spirit with consideration and representment of the Divine goodness, manifest in all the expresses of nature and grace, of providence and revelation; that God never "extinguishes the smoking flax, nor breaks the bruised reed;" that a constant and a hearty endeavour is the sacrifice which God delights in; that in the firmament of heaven there are little stars, and they are most in number, and there are but few of the greatest magnitude; that there are "children" and "babes in Christ," as well as strong men; and amongst these there are great differences; that the interruptions of the state of grace by intervening crimes, if they were rescinded by repentance, there were great danger in the interval, but served as increment of the Divine glory and arguments of care and diligence to us at the restitution. These and many more are then to be urged, when the sick person is in danger of being swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; and, therefore, to be insisted on in all like cases, as the physician gives him cordials: that we may do charity to him and minister comfort, not because they are always necessary, even in the midst of great sadnesses and discomforts. For we are to secure his love to God; that he acknowledge the Divine mercy; that he believe the article of remission of sins; that he be thankful to God for the blessings which already he hath received; and that he lay all the load of his discomfort upon himself, and his own incapacities of mercy: and then the sadness may be very great, and his tears clamorous, and his heart broken all in pieces, and his humility lower than the earth, and his hope indiscernible; and yet no danger to his

[y] In hunc ferè modum moribundus disseruit Socrates, apud Platonem in Phædone suo: Εἰ μὲν τυγχάνει ἀληθῆ ὄντα ἃ ἐγὼ λέγω, καλῶς δὴ ἔχει τὸ πείσθῆναι· εἰ δὲ μηδέν ἐστι τελευτήσαντι, ἀλλ' οὖν τοῦτόν γε τὸν χρόνον αὐτὸν πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου ἧττον τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀηδὴς ἔσομαι ὀδυρόμενος. ἡ δὲ ἀγνοιά μοι αὕτη οὐ ξυνδιατελεῖ, (κακὸν γὰρ ἦν) ἀλλ' ὀλίγου ὕστερον ἀπολεῖται. Non abs re ergò erit ut moribundus, si non de articulis fidei disserat et sentiat *de fiducia compertæ veritatis*, at saltem (quod de Socrate dixit Tertullianus) *de industria consultæ æquanimitatis*.

[z] Θαῤῥεῖν χρὴ, φίλε Βάττε, τάχ' ἄνριον ἔσσετ' ἄμεινον.
Ἐλπίδες ἐν ζωοῖσιν, ἀνέλπιστοι δὲ θανόντες.—THEOCR.
Ἐν ἐλπίσιν χρὴ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἔχειν βίον·
Ἄνθρωπος ἁτυχῶν σώζεται ὑπ' ἐλπίδος.—MENAND.

final condition. Despair reflects upon God, and dishonours the infinity of his mercy. And if the sick person do but confess, that God is not at all wanting in his promises, but ever abounding in his mercies; and that it is want of the condition, on his own part, that makes the misery; and that, if he had done his duty, God would save him; let him be assisted with perpetual prayers, with examples of lapsed and returning sinners, whom the church celebrates for saints, such as Mary Magdalen, Mary of Egypt, Afra, Thasis, Pelagia; let it be often inculcated to him, that as God's mercy is of itself infinite, so its demonstration to us is not determined to any certain period; but hath such latitudes in it, and reservations, which, as they are apt to restrain too great boldness, so also to become sanctuaries to disconsolate persons; let him be invited to throw himself upon God, upon these grounds; that he, who is our Judge, is also our Advocate and Redeemer; that he knows and pities our infirmities, and that our very hoping in him does endear him; and he will deliver us the rather for our confidence, when it is balanced with reverence and humility: and then all these supernumerary fears are advantageous to more necessary graces, and do more secure his final condition than they can disturb it.

11. When St. Arsenius was near his death, he was observed to be very tremulous, sad, weeping, and disconsolate. The standers-by asked the reason of his fears; wondering, that he, having lived in great sanctity for many years, should not now rejoice at the going forth of his prison. The good man confessed the fear, and withal said, it was no other than he had always borne about with him in the days of his pilgrimage; and what he then thought a duty, they had no reason now to call either a fault or a misery. Great sorrows, fears, and distrustings of a man's own condition, are oftentimes but abatements of confidence, or a remission of joys and gaieties of spirit; they are but like salutary clouds, dark and fruitful: and if the tempted person be strengthened in a love of God, though he go not farther in his hopes than to believe a possibility of being saved, than to say, "God can save him, if he please," and to pray that he will save him; his condition is a state of grace; it is like a root in the ground, trod upon, humble and safe, not so fine as the state of flowers; yet that which will spring up in as glorious a resurrection as that which looks fairer, and pleases the sense, and is indeed a blessing, but not a duty.

12. But there is a state of death-bed, which seems to have in it more question, and to be of nicer consideration; a sick person, after a vicious and base life; and if, upon whatsoever he can do, you give him hopes of a pardon, where is your promise to warrant it? If you do not give him hopes, do you not drive him to despair, and ascertain his ruin to verify your proposition? To this I answer, that despair is opposed to hope, and hope relies upon the Divine promises; and where there is no promise, there the despair is not a sin, but a mere impossibility. The accursed spirits, which are sealed up to the judgment of the last day, cannot hope; and he that repents not, cannot hope for pardon. And, therefore, if all which the state of death-bed can produce, be not the duty of repentance, which is required of necessity to pardon; it is not in such a person properly to be called despair, any more than it is blindness in a stone that it cannot see. Such a man is not within the capacities of pardon; and, therefore, all those acts of exterior repentance, and all his sorrow and resolution, and tears of emendation, and other preparatives to interior repentance, are like oil poured into mortal wounds; they are the care of the physician, and these are the cautions of the church, and they are at no hand to be neglected. For if they do not alter the state, they may lessen the judgment, or procure a temporal blessing; and if the person recover, they are excellent beginnings of the state of grace; and if they be pursued in a happy opportunity, will grow up into glory.

13. But if it be demanded, whether in such cases the curate be bound to give absolution; I can give no other answer but this, that if he lie under the censure of the church, the laws of the church are to determine the particular; and I know no church in the world but uses to absolve death-bed penitents, upon the instances of those actions of which their present condition is capable; though in the primitive ages, in some cases, they denied it. But if the sick person be under no positive censure, and is bound only by the guilt of habitual vice, if he desires the prayers of the church, she is bound in charity to grant them, to pray for pardon to him, and all other graces, in order to salvation; and if she absolves the penitent, towards God it hath no other efficacy but of a solemn prayer; and, therefore, it were better, that all the charity of the office were done, and the solemnity omitted; because, in the earnest prayer, she co-operates to his salvation as much as she can; and, by omitting the solemnity, distinguishes evil livers from holy persons; and walks securely, whilst she refuses to declare him pardoned, whom God hath not declared to be so. And possibly that form of absolution, which the churches of the West now use, being indicative and declaratory of a present pardon, is, for the very form sake, not to be used to death-bed penitents after a vicious life;[a] because if any thing more be intended in the form than a prayer, the truth of the affirmation may be questioned, and an ecclesiastical person hath no authority to say to such a man, "I absolve thee:" but if no more be intended but a prayer, it is better to use a mere prayer and common form of address, than such words, which may countenance insecure confidences, evil purposes, and worse lives.

14. Thirdly: If the devil tempts a sick person, who hath lived well, to presumption, and that he seems full of confidence and without trouble, the care that is then to be taken is, to consider the disease, and to state the question right. For, at some instants and periods, God visits the spirit of a man, and sends the emission of a bright ray into him;

[a] Pœnitentia quæ ab infirmo petitur, infirma est: pœnitentia quæ à moriente tantùm petitur, timeo nè et ipsa moriatur.—S. AUG. Serm. de Temp. Vide eund. lib. 1. homil. 41.

and some good men have been so used to apprehensions of the Divine mercy, that they have an habitual cheerfulness of spirit and hopes of salvation. St. Jerome reports, that Hilarion, in a death-bed agony, felt some tremblings of heart; till, reflecting upon his course of life, he found comforts springing from thence by a proper emanation, and departed cheerfully:[b] and Hezekiah represented to God, in prayer, the integrity of his life, and made it the instrument of his hope. And nothing of this is to be called presumption, provided it be in persons of eminent sanctity and great experience, old disciples, and the more perfect christians: but because such persons are but seldom and rare, if the same confidence be observed in persons of common imperfection and an ordinary life, it is to be corrected and allayed with consideration of the Divine severity and justice, and with the strict requisites of a holy life; with the deceit of a man's own heart, with consideration and general remembrances of secret sins: and that the most perfect state of life hath very great needs of mercy;[c] and "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" And the spirit of the man is to be promoted, and helped in the increase of contrition; as being the proper deletery to cure the extravagancies of a froward and intemperate spirit.

15. But there is a presumption commenced upon opinion, relying either upon a persuasion of single predestination, or else (which is worse) upon imaginary securities; that heaven is to be purchased upon conditions easier than a day's labour; and that an evil life may be reconciled to heaven, by the intervening of little or single acts of piety or repentance. If either of them both have actually produced ill life, to which they are apt, or apt to be abused, the persons are miserable in their condition, and cannot be absolutely remedied by going about to cure the presumption; that was the cause of all, but now it is the least thing to be considered: his whole state is corrupted, and men will not, by any discourses or spiritual arts used on their death-beds, be put into a state of grace; because then is no time to change the state, and there is no mutation then but by single actions; from good to better, a dying man may proceed, but not from the state of reprobation to the life of grace. And yet it is good charity to unloose the bonds of Satan, whereby the man is bound and led captive at his will; to take off the presumption, by destroying the cause; and then let the work of grace be set as forward as it can, and leave the event to God; for nothing else is left possible to be done. But if the sick man be of a good life, and yet have a degree of confidence beyond his virtue, upon the fancy of predestination, it is not then a time to rescind his opinion by a direct opposition, but let him be drawn off from the consideration of it by such discourses as are apt to make him humble and penitent; for they are the most apt instruments to secure the condition of the man, and attemper his spirit. These are the great temptations incident to the last scene of our lives; and are, therefore, more particularly suggested by the tempter, because they have in them something contrary to the universal effect of a holy life, and are designs to interpose between the end of the journey and the reception of the crown; and, therefore, it concerns every man, who is in a capacity of "receiving the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul," to lay up, in the course of his life, something against this great day of expense; that he may be better fortified with the armour of the Spirit against these last assaults of the devil, that he may not shipwreck in the haven.

16. "Eschewing evil" is but the one half of our work; we must also "do good." And now, in the few remanent days or hours of our life, there are certain exercises of religion which have a special relation to this state, and are, therefore, of great concernment to be done; that we may make our condition as certain as we can, and our portion of glory greater, and our pardon surer, and our love to increase; and that our former omissions and breaches be repaired, with a condition in some measure proportionable to those great hopes, which we then are going to possess. And, first, let the sick person, in the beginning of his sickness, and in every change and great accident of it, make acts of resignation to God, and entirely submit himself to the Divine will; remembering, that sickness may, to men properly disposed, do the work of God, and produce the effect of the Spirit, and promote the interest of his soul, as well as health, and oftentimes better; as being in itself, and by the grace of God, apt to make us confess our own impotency and dependencies, and to understand our needs of mercy, and the continual influences and supports of heaven; to withdraw our appetites from things below, to correct the vanities and insolencies of an impertinent spirit, to abate the extravagancies of the flesh, to put our carnal lusts into fetters and disability; to remember us of our state of pilgrimage, that this is our way, and our stage of trouble and banishment, and that heaven is our country: for so sickness is the trial of our patience, a fire to purge us, an instructor to teach us, a bridle to restrain us, and a state inferring great necessities of union and adhesions unto God. And as, upon these grounds, we have the same reason to accept sickness at the hands of God, as to receive physic from a physician; so it is argument of excellent grace to give God hearty thanks in our disease, and to accept it cheerfully, and with spiritual joy.

17. Some persons create to themselves excuses of discontent, and quarrel, not with the pain, but the ill consequence of sickness. It makes them troublesome to their friends; and consider not that their friends are bound to accept the trouble, as themselves to accept the sickness; that to tend the sick is, at that time, allotted for the portion of their work, and that charity receives it as a duty, and makes that duty to be a pleasure. And, however, if our friends account us a burden, let us also accept that circumstance of affliction to ourselves, with the same resignation and indifference as we entertain its occasion, the sickness itself; and pray to God to enkindle a flame of charity in

[b] Egredere, anima, quid times? septuaginta propè annis serviisti Christo, et jam mori times?—S. HIER. in Vita Hilar.

[c] Væ vitæ etiam laudabili, si sine misericordia discutias, eam.—S. AUG. lib. ix. Confess.

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their breasts, and to make them compensation for the charge and trouble we put them to; and then the care is at an end. But others excuse their discontent with a more religious colour, and call the disease their trouble and affliction, because it impedes their other parts of duty; they cannot preach, or study, or do exterior assistances of charity and alms, or acts of repentance and mortification. But it were well if we could let God proportion out our work, and set our task; let him choose what virtues we shall specially exercise: and when the will of God determines us, it is more excellent to endure afflictions with patience, equanimity, and thankfulness, than to do actions of the most pompous religion, and laborious or expensive charity; not only because there is a deliciousness in actions of religion and choice, which is more agreeable to our spirit than the toleration of sickness can be, which hath great reward, but no present pleasure; but also because our suffering and our employment is consecrated to us when God chooses it, and there is then no mixture of imperfection or secular interest, as there may be in other actions even of an excellent religion, when ourselves are the choosers. And let us also remember, that God hath not so much need of thy works, as thou hast of patience, humility, and resignation. St. Paul was a far more considerable person than thou canst be, and yet it pleased God to shut him in prison for two years, and, in that interval, God secured and promoted the work of the gospel: and although Epaphroditus was an excellent minister, yet God laid a sickness upon him, and, even in his disease, gave him work enough to do, though not of his own choosing. And, therefore, fear it not but the ends of religion or duty will well enough proceed without thy health; and thy own eternal interest, when God so pleases, shall better be served by sickness, and the virtues which it occasions, than by the opportunities of health, and an ambulatory active charity.

18. When thou art resigned to God, use fair and appointed means for thy recovery; trust not in thy spirit upon any instrument of health; as thou art willing to be disposed by God, so look not for any event upon the stock of any other cause or principle; be ruled by the physician and the people appointed to tend thee, that thou neither become troublesome to them, nor give any sign of impatience or a peevish spirit. But this advice only means, that thou do not disobey them out of any evil principle; and yet if reason be thy guide, to choose any other aid, or follow any other counsel, use it temperately, prudently, and charitably. It is not intended for a duty, that thou shouldst drink oil instead of wine, if thy minister reach it to thee, as did St. Bernard; nor that thou shouldst accept a cake tempered with linseed oil instead of oil of olives, as did F. Stephen, mentioned by Ruffinus: but that thou tolerate the defects of thy servants, and accept the evil accidents of thy disease, or the unsuccessfulness of thy physician's care, as descending on thee from the hands of God. Asa was noted in Scripture, that, "in his sickness, he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians."[d] Louis XI. of France was then the miserablest person in his kingdom, when he made himself their servant, courting them with great pensions and rewards, attending to their rules as oracles, and from their mouths waited for the sentence of life or death. We are, in these great accidents, especially to look upon God as the disposer of the events, which he very often disposes contrary to the expectation we may have of probable causes; and sometimes without physic we recover, and with physic and excellent applications we grow worse and worse; and God it is that makes the remedies unprosperous. In all these, and all other accidents, if we take care that the sickness of the body derive not itself into the soul, nor the pains of one procure impatience of the other, we shall alleviate the burden, and make it supportable and profitable. And certain it is, if men knew well to bear their sicknesses, humbly towards God, charitably towards their ministers, and cheerfully in themselves, there were no greater advantage in the world to be received, than upon a sick bed; and that alone hath in it the benefits of a church, of a religious assembly, of the works of charity and labour. And since our soul's eternal well-being depends upon the charities, and providence, and veracity of God, and we have nothing to show for it but his word and goodness, and that is infinitely enough; it is but reason we be not more nice and scrupulous about the usage and accommodation of our body: if we accept, at God's hands, sadness and dryness of affection and spiritual desertion,[e] patiently and with indifference, it is unhandsome to express ourselves less satisfied in the accidents about our body.

19. But if the sickness proceed to death, it is a new charge upon our spirits, and God calls for a final and entire resignation into his hands. And to a person who was of humble affections, and, in his life-time, of a mortified spirit, accustomed to bear the yoke of the Lord, this is easy, because he looks upon death, not only as the certain condition of nature, but as a necessary transition to a state of blessedness,[f] as the determination of his sickness, the period of human infelicities, the last change of condition, the beginning of a new, strange, and excellent life, a security against sin, a freedom from the importunities of a tempter, from the tyranny of an imperious lust, from the rebellion of concupiscence, from the disturbances and tempests of the irascible faculty, and from the fondness and childishness of the concupiscible; and St. Ambrose says well, "the troubles of this life and the dangers are so many, that, in respect of them, death is a remedy," and a fair, proper object of desires.[g] And we find that many saints have prayed for death,

[d] 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

[e] Νόσους δ' ἀνάγκη τὰς στελλάτους φέρειν.—SOPH. Phædr.

[f] Νομίζειν μὴν γὰρ δὴ τὸν ἐνθάδε βίον ὡς ἂν ἀκμὴν κνομένων εἶναι· τὸν δὲ θάνατον γένεσιν εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον καὶ τὸν εὐδαίμονα τοῖς φιλοσοφήσασι.—STRABO, lib. XV.
Peto, nate, suspice cœlum; non enim tibi vita eripitur, sed mutatur in melius, dixit mater Symphoriani apud Ambros. in Vita Symphor. Serm. in c. 7. Jobi.

[g] Hoc homo morte lucratur, nè malum immortale esset.—NAZ.
—— Κρεῖσσον γὰρ εἰς ἅπαξ θανεῖν,
Ἢ τὰς ἁπασας ἡμέρας πάσχειν κακῶς.—ÆSCHYL. Prom.

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that they might not see the persecutions and great miseries incumbent upon the church: and if the desire be not out of impatience, but of charity, and with resignation, there is no reason to reprove it. Elias prayed that God would "take his life,"[h] that he might not see the evils of Ahab and Jezebel, and their vexatious intendments against the prophets of the Lord. And St. Austin,[i] upon the incursion of the Vandals into Africa, called his clergy together, and, at their chapter, told them, "he had prayed to God either to deliver his people from the present calamity, or grant them patience to bear it, or that he would take him out of the world, that he might not see the miseries of his diocese;" adding, "that God had granted him the last:" and he presently fell sick, and died in the siege of his own Hippo. And if death, in many cases, be desirable, and for many reasons, it is always to be submitted to when God calls. And as it is always a misery to fear death,[k] so it is very often a sin, or the effect of sin. If our love to the world hath fastened our affections here, it is a direct sin: and this is, by the son of Sirach, noted to be the case of rich and great personages: "How bitter, O death, is thy remembrance to a man that is at rest in his possessions!"[l] But if it be a fear to perish in the ruins of eternity, they are not to blame for fearing, but that their own ill lives have procured the fear. And yet there are persons in the state of grace, but because they are in great imperfection, have such lawful fears of death, and of entering upon an uncertain sentence, which must stand eternally irreversible, be it good or bad, that they may, with piety and care enough, pray David's prayer, "O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen." But in this, and in all other cases, death must be accepted without murmur, though without fear it cannot. A man may pray to be delivered from it; and yet, if God will not grant it, he must not go as one haled to execution: but if, with all his imperfect fears, he shall throw himself upon God, and accept his sentence as righteous, whether it speak life or death, it is an act of so great excellency, that it may equal the good actions of many succeeding and surviving days; and, peradventure, a longer life will be yet more imperfect, and God therefore puts a period to it, that thou mayest be taken into a condition more certain, though less eminent. However, let not the fears of nature, or the fear of reason, or the fears of humility, become accidentally criminal, by a murmur or a pertinacious contesting against the event, which we cannot hinder, but ought to accept by an election secondary, rational, and pious, and upon supposition that God will not alter the sentence passed upon thy temporal life; always remembering, that, in christian philosophy, death hath in it an excellency of which the angels are not capable. For, by the necessity of our nature, we are made capable of dying for the holy Jesus; and next to the privilege of that act, is our willingness to die at his command, which turns necessity into virtue, and nature into grace, and grace to glory.

20. When the sick person is thus disposed, let him begin to trim his wedding garment, and dress his lamp, with the repetition of acts of repentance, perpetually praying to God for pardon of his sins, representing to himself the horror of them, the multitude, the obliquity, being helped by arguments apt to excite contrition, by repetition of penitential psalms and holy prayers; and he may, by accepting and humbly receiving his sickness at God's hand, transmit it into the condition of an act or effect of repentance, acknowledging himself by sin to have deserved and procured it, and praying that the punishment of his crimes may be here, and not reserved for the state of separation, and for ever.

21. But above all single acts of this exercise, we are concerned to see that nothing of other men's goods stick to us, but let us shake it off as we would a burning coal from our flesh; for it will destroy us, it will carry a curse with us, and leave a curse behind us.[m] Those who, by thy means or importunity, have become vicious, exhort to repentance and holy life; those whom thou hast cozened into crimes, restore to a right understanding; those who are, by violence and interest, led captive by thee to any indecency, restore to their liberty, and encourage to the prosecution of holiness; discover and confess thy fraud and unlawful arts, cease thy violence, and give as many advantages to virtue as thou hast done to viciousness. Make recompence for bodily wrongs, such as are wounds, dismemberings, and other disabilities: restore every man, as much as thou canst, to that good condition from which thou hast removed him; restore his fame, give back his goods, return the pawn, release forfeitures, and take off all unjust invasions or surprises of his estate, pay debts, satisfy for thy fraud and injustice as far as thou canst, and as thou canst, and as soon; or this alone is weight enough, no less than a mill-stone about thy neck. But if the dying man be of God, and in the state of grace, that is, if he have lived a holy life, repented seasonably, and have led a just, sober, and religious conversation in any acceptable degree, it is to be supposed he hath no great account to make for unpretended injuries, and unjust detentions; for if he had detained the goods of his neighbour fraudulently or violently, without amends, when it is in his power and opportunity to restore, he is not the man we suppose him in this present question: and although, in all cases, he is bound to restore according to his ability, yet the act is less excellent when it is compelled, and so it seems to be, if he have continued the injustice till he is forced to quit the purchase. However, if it be not done till then, let it be provided for then. And that I press this duty to pious persons at this time,

[h] 1 Kings xix. 4. [i] In Vita S. Aug. c. 16.

[k] Fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem,
Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ, qui ferre queat quoscunque labores,
Nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil ——— JUVEN.

[l] Ecclus. xli. 1.

[m] Deteriores sunt qui vitam moresque bonorum corrumpunt, his qui substantias et prædia diripiunt.—S. GREGOR.

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is only to oblige them to a diligent scrutiny concerning the lesser omissions of this duty in the matter of fame, or lesser debts, or spiritual restitution; or that those unevennesses of account, which were but of late transaction, may now be regulated; and that whatsoever is undone in this matter, from what principle soever it proceeds, whether of sin, or only of forgetfulness, or of imperfection, may now be made as exact as we can, and are obliged; and that those excuses, which made it reasonable and lawful to defer restitution, as want of opportunity, clearness of ability, and accidental inconvenience, be now laid aside, and the action be done or provided for, in the midst of all objections and inconvenient circumstances, rather than omit it, and hazard to perform it.

22. Hither, also, I reckon resolutions and forward purposes of emendation and greater severity, in case God return to us hopes of life; which, therefore, must be reinforced, that we may serve the ends of God, and understand all his purposes, and make use of every opportunity; every sickness laid upon us being with a design of drawing us nearer to God; and even holy purposes are good actions of the Spirit, and principles of religion: and though alone they cannot do the work of grace, or change the state, when they are ineffectual, that is, when either we will not bring them into act, or that God will not let us; yet, to a man already in the state of grace, they are the additions of something good, and are like blowing of coals, which, although it can put no life into a dead coal, yet it makes a live coal shine brighter, and burn clearer, and adds to it some accidental degrees of heat.

23. Having thus disposed himself to the peace of God, let him make peace with all those, in whom he knows, or suspects, any minutes of anger, or malice, or displeasure towards him, submitting himself to them with humility, whom he unworthily hath displeased,[n] asking pardon of them who say they are displeased, and offering pardon to them that have displeased him; and then let him crave the peace of holy church. For it is all this while to be supposed, that he hath used the assistance and prayers, the counsel and the advices, of a spiritual man, and that, to this purpose, he hath opened to him the state of his whole life, and made him to understand what emendations of his faults he hath made, what acts of repentance he hath done, how lived after his fall and reparation, and that he hath submitted all that he did, or undid, to the discerning of a holy man, whose office it is to guide his soul in this agony and last offices. All men cannot have the blessing of a wise and learned minister, and some die where they can have none at all; yet it were a safer course to do as much of this as we can, and to a competent person, if we can; if we cannot, then to the best we have, according as we judge it to be of spiritual advantage to us: for, in this conjuncture of accidents, it concerns us to be sure, if we may, and not to be deceived, where we can avoid it: because we shall never return to life, to do this work again. And if, after this intercourse with a spiritual guide, we be reconciled by the solemn prayer of the church, the prayer of absolution, it will be of great advantage to us; we depart with our Father's blessing, we die in the actual communion of the church, we hear the sentence of God applied after the manner of men, and the promise of pardon made circumstantiate, material, present, and operative upon our spirits, and have our portion of the promise, which is recorded by St. James, that "if the elders of the church pray over a sick person" fervently and "effectually," (add solemnly,) "his sins shall be forgiven him," (that is, supposing him to be in a capacity to receive it,) because such prayers, of such a man, are very prevalent.[o]

24. All this is, in a spiritual sense, "washing the hands in innocency," and then let him "go to the altar:" let him not, for any excuse less than impossibility, omit to receive the holy sacrament; which the fathers assembled in the great Nicene council, have taught all the christian world to call, "the most necessary provisions for our last journey;"[p] which is the memory of that death by which we hope for life; which is the seed of immortality and resurrection of our bodies; which unites our spirit to Christ; which is a great defensative against the hostilities of the devil; which is the most solemn prayer of the church, united and made acceptable by the sacrifice of Christ; which is then represented and exhibited to God; which is the great instrument of spiritual increase, and the growth of grace; which is duty and reward, food and physic, health and pleasure, deletery and cordial, prayer and thanksgiving, an union of mysteries, the marriage of the soul, and the perfection of all the rites of christianity: dying with the holy sacrament in us, is a going to God with Christ in our arms, and interposing him between us and his angry sentence. But then we must be sure that we have done all the duty, without which we cannot communicate worthily. For else Satan comes in the place of Christ, and it is a horror not less than infinite, to appear before God's tribunal possessed, in our souls, with the spirit of darkness. True it is, that, by many laws of the church,[q] the bishop and the minister are bound to give the holy eucharist to every person who, in the article or apparent danger of death, desires it, provided that he hath submitted himself to the imposition and counsels of the bishop or guide of his soul, that, in case he recovers, he may be brought to the peace of God and his church, by such steps and degrees of repentance, by which other public sinners are reconciled. But to this gentleness of discipline, and easiness of administration, those excellent persons who made the canons thought themselves compelled, by the rigour of the

[n] Πρὸς τὸν τελευτήσαντ' ἕκαστος, κἂν σφόδρα
Ἄν ἐχθρός ᾖ τις, γίνεται φίλος τότε.

[o] Jam. vi. 14, 15.

[p] Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐξοδευόντων ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ κανονικὸς νόμος φυλαχθήσεται καὶ νῦν· ὥστε εἴ τις ἐξοδεύει, τοῦ τελευταίου καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτου ἐφοδίου μὴ ἀποστερεῖσθαι.—Conc. Nicen. can. 13.

[q] Concil. Nicen. can. eod. Conc. Ancyr. c. 6. Conc. Aurelian. ii. c. 12.

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Novatians; and because they admitted not lapsed persons to the peace of the church upon any terms, though never so great, so public, or so penal a repentance; therefore, these not only remitted them to the exercise and station of penitents, but also to the communion. But the fathers of the council of Eliberis denied this favour to persons who, after baptism, were idolaters;[r] either intending this as a great argument to affright persons from so great a crime, or else believing that it was unpardonable after baptism, a contradiction to that state which we entered into by baptism, and the covenant evangelical. However, I desire all learned persons to observe it, and the less learned also to make use of it, that those more ancient councils of the church,[s] which commanded the holy communion to be given to dying persons, meant only such, which, according to the custom of the church, were under the conditions of repentance, that is, such to whom punishment and discipline of divers years were enjoined; and if it happened they died in the interval, before the expiration of their time of reconciliation, then they admitted them to the communion. Which describes to us the doctrine of those ages, when religion was purer, and discipline more severe, and holy life secured by rules of excellent government; that those only were fit to come to that feast, who, before their last sickness, had finished the repentance of many years, or, at least, had undertaken it.[t] I cannot say it was so always, and in all churches; for as the disciples grew slack, or men's persuasions had variety, so they were more ready to grant repentance, as well as absolution, to dying persons: but it was otherwise in the best times, and with severer prelates. And certainly it were great charity to deny the communion to persons, who have lived viciously till their death; provided it be by competent authority, and done sincerely, prudently, and without temporal interest: to other persons, who have lived good lives, or repented of their bad, though less perfectly, it ought not to be denied, and they less ought to neglect it.

25. But as every man must put himself, so also he must put his house in order, make his will, if he have an estate to dispose of; and in that he must be careful to do justice to every man, and charity to the poor, according as God hath enabled him: and though charity is then very late, if it begins not earlier; yet, if this be but an act of an ancient habit, it is still more perfect, as it succeeds in time, and superadds to the former stock. And, among other acts of duty, let it be remembered, that it is excellent charity to leave our will and desires clear, plain, and determinate, that contention and lawsuits may be prevented, by the explicate declaration of the legacies. At last, and in all instances and periods of our following days, let the former good acts be renewed; let God be praised for all his graces and blessings of our life, let him be entreated for pardon of our sins, let acts of love and contrition, of hope, of joy, of humility, be the work of every day which God still permits us, always remembering to ask remission for those sins we remember not. And if the condition of our sickness permits it, let our last breath expire with an act of love; that it may begin the charities of eternity,[u] and, like a taper burnt to its lowest base, it may go out with a great emission of light, leaving a sweet smell behind us, to perfume our coffin; and that these lights, newly made brighter, or trimmed up, in our sickness, may shine about our hearse, that they may become arguments of a pious sadness to our friends, (as the charitable coats, which Dorcas made, were to the widows,) and exemplar to all those who observed, or shall hear of, our holy life and religious death. But if it shall happen that the disease be productive of evil accidents, as a disturbed fancy, a weakened understanding, wild discoursings, or any deprivation of the use of reason, it concerns the sick person, in the happy intervals of a quiet, untroubled spirit, to pray earnestly to God, that nothing may pass from him, in the rages of a fever, or worse distemper, which may less become his duty, or give scandal, or cause trouble to the persons in attendance; and if he shall also renounce and disclaim all such evil words which his disease may speak, not himself, he shall do the duty of a christian and a prudent person. And after these preparatives, he may, with piety and confidence, resign his soul into the hands of God, to be deposited in holy receptacles till "the day of restitution of all things;" and in the mean time, with a quiet spirit, descend into that state which is the lot of Cæsars, and where all kings and conquerors have laid aside their glories.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and holy Jesus, who, by death, hast overcome death, and by thy passion hast taken out its sting, and made it to become one of the gates of heaven, and an entrance to felicity; have mercy upon me now, and at the hour of my death: let thy grace accompany me all the days of my life, that I may, by a holy conversation, and an habitual performance of my duty, wait for the coming of our Lord, and be ready to enter with thee at whatsoever hour thou shalt come. Lord, let not my death be in any sense unprovided, nor untimely, nor hasty, but after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of a great and miraculous mercy. Let my senses and understanding be preserved entire till the last of my days, and grant that I may die the death of the righteous, having first discharged all my obligations of justice, leaving none miserable and unprovided in my departure; but be thou the portion of all my friends and relatives, and

[r] Conc. Elib. c. 1.

[s] Μετὰ δοκιμασίας ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐπιδότω.—Concil. Nicen. c. 13.
Τούτους ἐπὶ ὅρῳ δεχθῆναι—Conc. Anc. c. 9.
De his qui in pœnitentia positi vitâ excesserunt, placuit nullum communione vacuum debere dimitti.—Conc. Aurel. ii. n. 12.

[t] Vide Concil. Eliber. c. 46, et c. 69.

[u] ——————Ut se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore vitæ
Cedat uti conviva satur——Hor. Serm. I.

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let thy blessing descend upon their heads, and abide there, till they shall meet me in the bosom of our Lord. Preserve me ever in the communion and peace of the church; and bless my deathbed with the opportunity of a holy and spiritual guide, with the assistance and guard of angels, with the perception of the holy sacrament, with patience and dereliction of my own desires, with a strong faith and a firm and humble hope, with just measures of repentance, and great treasures of charity to thee, my God, and to all the world; that my soul, in the arms of the holy Jesus, may be deposited with safety and joy, there to expect the revelation of thy day, and then to partake the glories of thy kingdom, O eternal and holy Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Crucifixion of the Holy Jesus.

1. WHEN the sentence of death pronounced against the Lord was to be put in execution, the soldiers pulled off the robe of mockery, the scarlet mantle, which in jest they put upon him, and put on his own garments. But, as Origen observes, the evangelist mentioned not that they took off the crown of thorns; what might serve their interest they pursue, but nothing of remission or mercy to the afflicted Son of man: but so it became the King of sufferings, not to lay aside his imperial thorns till they were changed into diadems of glory. But now Abel is led forth by his brother to be slain: a gay spectacle to satisfy impious eyes, who would not stay behind, but attended and waited upon the hangman to see the catastrophe of this bloody tragedy.[a] But when Piety looks on, she beholds a glorious mystery. Sin laughed to see the King of heaven and earth, and the great lover of souls, instead of the sceptre of his kingdom, to bear a tree of cursing and shame. But Piety wept tears of pity, and knew they would melt into joy, when she should behold that cross, which loaded the shoulders of her Lord, afterward sit upon the sceptres, and be engraved and signed upon the foreheads of kings.

2. It cannot be thought but the ministers of Jewish malice used all the circumstances of affliction, which, in any case, were accustomed towards malefactors and persons to be crucified; and therefore it was that in some old figures we see our blessed Lord described with a table appendant to the fringe of his garment, set full of nails and pointed iron;[b] for so sometimes they afflicted persons condemned to that kind of death: and St. Cyprian affirms,[c] that Christ did stick to the wood that he carried, being galled with the iron at his heels, and nailed even before his crucifixion. But this, and the other accidents of his journey, and their malice, so crushed his wounded, tender, and virginal body, that they were forced to lay the load upon a Cyrenian, fearing that he should die with less shame and smart than they intended him. But so he was pleased to take man unto his aid, not only to represent his own need, and the dolorousness of his passion, but to consign the duty unto man, that we must enter into a fellowship of Christ's sufferings, taking up the cross of martyrdom when God requires us, enduring affronts, being patient under affliction, loving them that hate us, and being benefactors to our enemies, abstaining from sensual and intemperate delight, forbidding to ourselves lawful festivities and recreations of our weariness, when we have an end of the spirit to serve upon the ruins of the body's strength, mortifying our desires, breaking our own will, not seeking ourselves, being entirely resigned to God. These are the cross, and the nails, and the spear, and the whip, and all the instruments of a christian's passion. And we may consider, that every man in this world shall, in some sense or other, bear a cross: few men escape it, and it is not well with them that do: but they only bear it well that follow Christ, and tread in his steps, and bear it for his sake, and walk as he walked; and he that follows his own desires, when he meets with a cross there, (as it is certain enough he will,) bears the cross of his concupiscence, and that hath no fellowship with the cross of Christ. By the precept of "bearing the cross," we are not tied to pull evil upon ourselves, that we may imitate our Lord in nothing but in being afflicted; or to personate the punitive exercises of mortification and severe abstinences, which were eminent in some saints, and to which they had special assistances, as others had the gift of chastity, and for which they had special reason, and, as they apprehended, some great necessities: but it is required that "we bear our own cross;" so said our dearest Lord.[d] For when the cross of Christ is laid upon us, and we are called to martyrdom, then it is our own, because God made it to be our portion: and when, by the necessities of our spirit and the rebellion of our body, we need exterior mortifications and acts of self-denial, then also it is our own cross, because our needs have made it so; and so it is when God sends us sickness, or any other calamity: whatever is either an effect of our ghostly needs, or the condition of our temporal estate, it calls for our sufferance, and patience, and equanimity; for "therefore Christ hath suffered for us," saith St. Peter,[e] "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps," who bore his cross as long as he could; and when he could no longer, he murmured not, but sank under it; and then he was content to receive such aid, not which he chose himself, but such as was assigned him.

3. Jesus was led out of the gates of Jerusalem,[f] that he might become the sacrifice for persons without the pale, even for all the world: and the daughters of Jerusalem followed him with pious

[a] S. Aug. Tract. 119. in Joan.

[b] O Carnificinum cribrum quod credo fore,
Ità te forabunt patibulatum per vias
Stimulis, si noster huc revenerit senex.—PLAUT. in Mostel.

[c] Tu ipse patibuli tui bajulus hærebas ligno quod toleras, evectionis et passionis anxietates sustinens et labores.—S. CYPR. de Pass.

[d] Matt. xvi. 24.

[e] 1 Pet. ii. 21.

[f] Heb. xiii. 13.

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tears till they came to Calvary, a place difficult in the ascent, eminent and apt for the publication of shame, a hill of death and dead bones, polluted and impure, and there beheld him stripped naked, who clothes the field with flowers, and all the world with robes, and the whole globe with the canopy of heaven, and so dressed, that now every circumstance was a triumph: by his disgrace he trampled upon our pride; by his poverty and nakedness he triumphed over our covetousness and love of riches; and, by his pains, chastised the delicacies of our flesh, and broke in pieces the fetters of concupiscence.[g] For as soon as Adam was clothed, he quitted Paradise; and Jesus was made naked, that he might bring us in again. And we also must be despoiled of all our exterior adherencies, that we may pass through the regions of duty and divine love to a society of blessed spirits, and a clarified, immortal, and beatified estate.

4. There they nailed Jesus with four nails,[h] fixed his cross in the ground, which, with its fall into the place of its station, gave infinite torture, by so violent a concussion of the body of our Lord, which rested upon nothing but four great wounds; where he was designed to suffer a long and lingering torment. For crucifixion, as it was an exquisite pain, sharp and passionate, so it was not of quick effect towards taking away the life. St. Andrew was two whole days upon the cross; and some martyrs have upon the cross been rather starved and devoured with birds, than killed with the proper torment of the tree. But Jesus took all his passion with a voluntary susception, God heightening it to great degrees of torment supernaturally; and he laid down his life voluntarily, when his Father's wrath was totally appeased towards mankind.

5. Some have fancied that Christ was pleased to take something from every condition, of which man ever was, or shall be, possessed; taking immunity from sin from Adam's state of innocence, punishment and misery from the state of Adam fallen, the fulness of grace from the state of renovation, and perfect contemplation of the Divinity and beatific joys from the state of comprehension and the blessedness of heaven; meaning, that the humanity of our blessed Saviour did, in the sharpest agony of his passion, behold the face of God, and communicate in glory. But I consider, that, although the two natures of Christ were knit by a mysterious union into one person, yet the natures still retain their incommunicable properties. Christ, as God, is not subject to sufferings; as a man, he is the subject of miseries: as God, he is eternal; as man, mortal and commensurable by time: as God, the supreme lawgiver; as man, most humble and obedient to the law: and therefore that the human nature was united to the Divine, it does not infer that it must, in all instances, partake of the Divine felicities, which in God are essential, to man communicated without necessity, and by an arbitrary dispensation. Add to this, that some virtues and excellencies were in the soul of Christ, which could not consist with the state of glorified and beatified persons; such as are humility, poverty of spirit, hope, holy desires; all which, having their seat in the soul, suppose, even in the supremest faculty, a state of pilgrimage, that is, a condition which is imperfect, and in order to something beyond its present. For therefore "Christ ought to suffer," saith our blessed Lord himself,[i] and "so enter into his glory." And St. Paul affirms,[k] that "we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." And again,[l] "Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." Thus his present life was a state of merit and work, and, as a reward of it, he was crowned with glory and immortality, his name was exalted, his kingdom glorified, he was made the Lord of all the creatures, the first-fruits of the resurrection, the exemplar of glory, and the Prince and Head of the catholic church: and because this was his recompence, and the fruits of his humility and obedience, it is certain it was not a necessary consequence, and a natural efflux, of the personal union of the Godhead with the humanity. This I discourse to this purpose, that we may not in our esteem lessen the suffering of our dearest Lord by thinking he had the supports of actual glory in the midst of all his sufferings. For there is no one minute, or ray of glory, but its fruition does outweigh and make us insensible of the greatest calamities, and the spirit of pain, which can be extracted from all the infelicities of this world. True it is, that the greatest beauties in this world are receptive of an allay of sorrow, and nothing can have pleasure in all capacities. The most beauteous feathers of the birds of paradise, the ostrich, or the peacock, if put into our throat, are not there so pleasant as to the eye: but the beatific joys of the least glory of heaven take away all pain, "wipe away all tears from our eyes;" and it is not possible, that, at the same instant, the soul of Jesus should be ravished with glory, and yet abated with pains grievous and afflictive. On the other side, some say that the soul of Jesus upon the cross suffered the pains of hell, and all the torments of the damned, and that, without such sufferings, it is not imaginable he should pay the price, which God's wrath should demand of us. But the same that reproves the one, does also reprehend the other; for the hope that was the support of the soul of Jesus, as it confesses an imperfection that is not consistent with the state of glory, so it excludes the despair that is the torment proper to accursed souls. Our dearest Lord suffered the whole condition of humanity, "sin only excepted," and freed us from hell with suffering those sad pains, and merited heaven for his own humanity, as the head, and all faithful people as the

[g] Athanas. de Pass. et Cruce Domini.

[h] —— κεῖθι φονῆες Εἰς δόρυ τετράπλευρον.—NONN.
Albigenses primi pinxerunt imaginem crucifixi uno clavo simul utrumque pedem configente, et Virginem Mariam monoculam; utrumque in derisionem: sed postea prior figura retenta est, et irrepsit in vulgarem famam.—LUCAS Tud. lib. ii. contra Albig.

[i] Luke xxiv. 26, secundùm vulg. interp.

[k] Heb. ii. 9.

[l] Philip. ii. 8, 9.

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members of his mystical body. And therefore his life here was only a state of pilgrimage, not at all trimmed with beatific glories. Much less was he ever in the state of hell, or upon the cross felt the formal misery and spirit of torment, which is the portion of damned spirits; because it was impossible Christ should despair, and without despair it is impossible there should be a hell. But this is highly probable, that, in the intension of degrees and present anguish, the soul of our Lord might feel a greater load of wrath than is incumbent in every instant upon perishing souls. For all the sadness which may be imagined to be in hell, consists in acts produced from principles, that cannot surpass the force of human or angelical nature; but the pain which our blessed Lord endured for the expiation of our sins, was an issue of an united and concentred anger, was received into the heart of God and man, and was commensurate to the whole latitude of the grace, patience, and charity of the Word incarnate.

6. And now behold the Priest and the Sacrifice of all the world laid upon the altar of the cross, bleeding, and tortured, and dying, to reconcile his Father to us: and he was arrayed with ornaments more glorious than the robes of Aaron. The crown of thorns was his mitre, the cross his pastoral staff, the nails piercing his hands were instead of rings, the ancient ornament of priests, and his flesh razed and checkered with blue and blood instead of the parti-coloured robe. But as this object calls for our devotion, our love and eucharist to our dearest Lord; so it must needs irreconcile us to sin, which, in the eye of all the world, brought so great shame, and pain, and amazement upon the Son of God, when he only became engaged by a charitable substitution of himself in our place; and therefore we are assured, by the demonstration of sense and experience, it will bring death, and all imaginable miseries, as the just expresses of God's indignation and hatred: for to this we may apply the words of our Lord in the prediction of miseries to Jerusalem, "If this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" For it is certain, Christ infinitely pleased his Father, even by becoming the person made guilty in estimate of law; and yet so great charity of our Lord, and the so great love and pleasure of his Father, exempted him not from suffering pains intolerable: and much less shall those escape, who provoke and displease God, and "despise so great salvation," which the holy Jesus hath wrought with the expense of blood and so precious a life.

7. But here we see a great representation and testimony of the Divine justice, who was so angry with sin, who had so severely threatened it, who does so essentially hate it, that he would not spare his only Son, when he became a conjunct person, relative to the guilt, by undertaking the charges of our nature. For although God hath set down in holy Scripture[m] the order of his justice, and the manner of its manifestation, that one soul shall not perish for the sins of another; yet this is meant for justice and for mercy too, that is, he will not curse the son for the father's fault, or, in any relation whatsoever, substitute one person for another to make him involuntarily guilty: but when this shall be desired by a person that cannot finally perish, and does a mercy to the exempt persons, and is a voluntary act of the suscipient, and shall in the event also redound to an infinite good, it is no deflection from the Divine justice to excuse many by the affliction of one, who also for that very suffering shall have infinite compensation. We see that, for the sin of Cham, all his posterity were accursed: the subjects of David died with the plague, because their prince numbered the people: idolatry is punished in the children of the fourth generation: Saul's seven sons were hanged for his breaking the league of Gibeon; and Ahab's sin was punished in his posterity, he escaping, and "the evil was brought upon his house in his son's days." In all these cases the evil descended upon persons in near relation to the sinner, and was a punishment to him and a misery to these, and were either chastisements also of their own sins, or, if they were not, they served other ends of Providence, and led the afflicted innocent to a condition of recompence accidentally procured by that infliction. But if for such relation's sake and economical and political conjunction, as between prince and people, the evil may be transmitted from one to another, much rather is it just, when, by contract, a competent and conjunct person undertakes to quit his relative. Thus, when the hand steals the back is whipped; and an evil eye is punished with an hungry belly. Treason causes the whole family to be miserable; and a sacrilegious grandfather hath sent a locust to devour the increase of the nephews.

8. But, in our case, it is a voluntary contract, and therefore no injustice; all parties are voluntary. God is the supreme Lord, and his actions are the measure of justice: we, who had deserved the punishment, had great reason to desire a Redeemer: and yet Christ, who was to pay the ransom, was more desirous of it than we were, for we asked it not before it was promised and undertaken. But thus we see that sureties pay the obligation of the principal debtor, and the pledges of contracts have been, by the best and wisest nations, slain, when the articles have been broken: the Thessalians slew 250 pledges; the Romans[n] 300 of the Volsci, and threw the Tarentines from the Tarpeian rock. And that it may appear Christ was a person in all senses competent to do this for us, himself testifies,[o] that he had "power over his own life, to take it up or lay it down." And, therefore, as there can be nothing against the most exact justice and reason of laws and punishments; so it magnifies the Divine mercy, who removes the punishment from us, who of necessity must have sunk under it, and yet makes us to adore his severity, who would not forgive us without punishing his Son for us; to consign unto us his perfect hatred against sin, to conserve the

[m] Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 2—5, &c.
[n] Livius. Vide lib. Si quis rerum, D. De Custod. et Exhib. Reorum. Lib. Si à reo, D. De Fidejussoribus.

[o] John x. 18.

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sacredness of his laws, and to imprint upon us great characters of fear and love. The famous Locrian, Zaleucus, made a law, that all adulterers should lose both their eyes: his son was first unhappily surprised in the crime; and his father, to keep a temper between the piety and soft spirit of a parent, and the justice and severity of a judge, put out one of his own eyes, and one of his son's.[p] So God did with us; he made some abatement, that is, as to the person with whom he was angry, but inflicted his anger upon our Redeemer, whom he essentially loved, to secure the dignity of his sanctions, and the sacredness of obedience; so marrying justice and mercy by the intervening of a commutation. Thus David escaped by the death of his son, God choosing that penalty for the expiation: and Cimon offered himself to prison, to purchase the liberty of his father Miltiades. It was a filial duty in Cimon, and yet the law was satisfied. And both these concurred in our great Redeemer. For God, who was the sole arbitrator, so disposed it, and the eternal Son of God submitted to this way of expiating our crimes, and became an argument of faith and belief of the great article of "remission of sins," and other its appendant causes and effects and adjuncts; it being wrought by a visible and notorious passion. It was made an encouragement of hope; for "he that spared not his own Son" to reconcile us, "will with him give all things else" to us so reconciled; and a great endearment of our duty and love, as it was a demonstration of his. And, in all the changes and traverses of our life, he is made to us a great example of all excellent actions, and all patient sufferings.

9. In the midst of two thieves, three long hours the holy Jesus hung, clothed with pain, agony, and dishonour, all of them so eminent and vast, that he who could not but hope, whose soul was enchased with divinity, and dwelt in the bosom of God, and in the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity, yet had a cloud of misery so thick and black drawn before him, that he complained as if God had forsaken him: but this was "the pillar of cloud" which conducted Israel into Canaan. And as God behind the cloud supported the holy Jesus, and stood ready to receive him into the union of his glories; so his soul, in that great desertion, had internal comforts proceeding from consideration of all those excellent persons, which should be adopted into the fellowship of his sufferings, which should imitate his graces, which should communicate in his glories. And we follow this cloud to our country, having Christ for our guide: and though he trod the way, leaning upon the cross, which, like the staff of Egypt, pierced his hands; yet it is to us a comfort and support, pleasant to our spirits as the sweetest canes, strong as the pillars of the earth, and made apt for our use, by having been borne and made smooth by the hands of our elder Brother.

10. In the midst of all his torments, Jesus only made one prayer of sorrow, to represent his sad condition to his Father; but no accent of murmur, no syllable of anger against his enemies: instead of that, he sent up a holy, charitable, and effective prayer for their forgiveness, and by that prayer obtained of God, that within fifty-five days eight thousand of his enemies were converted. So potent is the prayer of charity, that it prevails above the malice of men, turning the arts of Satan into the designs of God; and when malice occasions the prayer, the prayer becomes an antidote to malice. And, by this instance, our blessed Lord consigned that duty to us, which, in his sermons, he had preached, That we should forgive our enemies, and pray for them: and, by so doing, ourselves are freed from the stings of anger, and the storms of a revengeful spirit; and we oftentimes procure servants to God, friends to ourselves, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

11. Of the two thieves that were crucified together with our Lord, the one blasphemed; the other had, at that time, the greatest piety in the world,[q] except that of the blessed Virgin, and particularly had such a faith, that all the ages of the church could never show the like. For when he saw Christ "in the same condemnation" with himself, crucified by the Romans, accused and scorned by the Jews, forsaken by his own apostles; a dying, distressed man, doing at that time no miracles to attest his divinity or innocence; yet then he confesses him to be a Lord, and a King, and his Saviour: he confessed his own shame and unworthiness; he submitted to the death of the cross; and, by his voluntary acceptation and tacit volition of it, made it equivalent to as great a punishment of his own susception; he showed an incomparable modesty, begging but for a remembrance only; he knew himself so sinful, he durst ask no more; he reproved the other thief for blasphemy; he confessed the world to come, and owned Christ publicly; he prayed to him, he hoped in him, and pitied him; showing an excellent patience, in this sad condition. And in this I consider, that besides the excellency of some of these acts, and the goodness of all, the like occasion for so exemplary faith never can occur; and until all these things shall, in these circumstances, meet in any one man, he must not hope for so safe an exit, after an evil life, upon the confidence of this example. But now Christ had the key of Paradise in his hand; and God blessed the good thief with this opportunity of letting him in, who, at another time, might have waited longer, and been tied to harder conditions. And, indeed, it is very probable, that he was much advantaged by the intervening accident of dying at the same time with Christ; there being a natural compassion produced in us towards the partners of our miseries. For Christ was not void of human passions, though

[p] Apud Diodorum Sicul. et Ælian. "Ινα μὴ ὁ νεανίσκος τυφλωθῇ τελέως, καὶ ἵνα μὴ διαφθαρῇ τὸ ἄπαξ κεκυρωμένον.

[q] *Latro* non semper prædonem aut grassatorem denotat, sed *militem*, qui fortassis ob zelum Judæorum aliquid contra leges Romanas fecerat: alioqui vir fuit non omnino malus. Titubaverunt qui viderunt Christum mortuos suscitantem; credidit ille qui videbat secum in ligno pendentem. Recolamus fidem latronis, quam non invenit Christus post resurrectionem in discipulis suis.—S. Aug. Serm. 144. de Tempore.

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he had in them no imperfection or irregularity; and, therefore, might be invited by the society of misery, the rather to admit him to participate his joys; and St. Paul proves him to be a "merciful High-Priest," because "he was touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" the first expression of which was to this blessed thief: Christ and he together sat at the supper of bitter herbs, and Christ paid his symbol, promising that he should "that day be together with him in Paradise."

12. By the cross of Christ stood the holy Virgin-mother, upon whom old Simeon's prophecy was now verified: for now she felt "a sword passing through her very soul;" she stood without clamour and womanish noises;[r] sad, silent, and with a modest grief, deep as the waters of the abyss, but smooth as the face of a pool; full of love, and patience, and sorrow, and hope. Now she was put to it to make use of all those excellent discourses her holy Son had used to build up her spirit, and fortify it against this day. Now she felt the blessings and strengths of faith; and she passed from the griefs of the passion, to the expectation of the resurrection; and she rested in this death, as in a sad remedy; for she knew it reconciled God with all the world. But her hope drew a veil before her sorrow; and though her grief was great enough to swallow her up, yet her love was greater, and did swallow up her grief. But the sun also had a veil upon his face, and taught us to draw a curtain before the passion, which would be the most artificial expression of its greatness; whilst by silence and wonder we confess it great beyond our expression, or, which is all one, great as the burden and baseness of our sins. And with this veil drawn before the face of Jesus, let us suppose him at the gates of Paradise, calling with his last words, in a loud voice, to have them opened, that "the King of glory might come in."

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy Jesus, who for our sakes didst suffer incomparable anguish and pains, commensurate to thy love, and our miseries, which were infinite; that thou mightest purchase for us blessings upon earth, and an inheritance in heaven; dispose us by love, thankfulness, humility, and obedience, to receive all the benefit of thy passion; granting unto us and thy whole church, remission of all our sins, integrity of mind, health of body, competent maintenance, peace in our days, a temperate air, fruitfulness of the earth, unity and integrity of faith, extirpation of heresies, reconcilement of schisms, destruction of all wicked counsels intended against us; and bind the hands of rapine and sacrilege, that they may not destroy the vintage, and root up the vine itself. Multiply thy blessings upon us, sweetest Jesus; increase in us true religion, sincere and actual devotion in our prayers, patience in troubles, and whatsoever is necessary to our soul's health, or conducing to thy glory. Amen.

[r] S. Ambros. in Luc. lib. x.
[s] Gen. l. Tacit. Annal. lib. xxi.

II.

O dearest Saviour, I adore thy mercies and thy incomparable love expressed in thy so voluntary susception and affectionate suffering such horrid and sad tortures, which cannot be remembered without a sad compassion; the waters of bitterness entered into thy soul, and the storms of death, and thy Father's anger, broke thee all in pieces; and what shall I do, who, by my sins, have so tormented my dearest Lord? What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficiently expressive, what hatred and detestation of my crimes, can be equal and commensurate to those sad accidents which they have produced? Pity me, O Lord; pity me, dearest God; turn those, thy merciful eyes, towards me, O most merciful Redeemer; for my sins are great, like unto thy passion; full of sorrow and shame, and a burden too great for me to bear. Lord, who hast done so much for me, now "only speak the word, and thy servant shall be whole." Let thy wounds heal me, thy virtues amend me, thy death quicken me; that I, in this life, suffering the cross of a sad and salutary repentance, in the union and merits of thy cross and passion, may die with thee, and rest with thee, and rise again with thee, and live with thee for ever, in the possession of thy glories, O dearest Saviour Jesus. Amen.

SECTION XVI.

Of the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

1. WHILE it was yet "early in the morning, upon the first day of the week, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, brought sweet spices to the sepulchre," that they might again embalm the holy body; (for the rites of embalming, among the Hebrews, used to last forty days;[s]) and their love was not satisfied with what Joseph had done. They, therefore, hastened to the grave; and after they had expended their money, and bought the spices, then begin to consider, "who shall remove the stone:" but yet they still go on, and their love answers the objection, not knowing how it should be done, but yet resolving to go through all the difficulties; but never remember or take care to pass the guards of soldiers. But when they came to the sepulchre, they found the guard affrighted and removed, and "the stone rolled away;" for there had, a little before their arrival, been a great earthquake;[b] and "an angel descending from

[b] Aurora lucis rutilat,
Cœlum laudibus intonat,
Mundus exsultans jubilat,
Gemens infernus ululat;

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heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it;" and for fear of him, the guards about the tomb became "astonished with fear," and were "like dead men:" and some of them ran to the high priests, and told them what happened. But they, now resolving to make their iniquity safe and unquestionable, by a new crime, hire the soldiers to tell an incredible and a weak fable, that "his disciples came by night, and stole him away:" against which accident the wit of man could give no more security than themselves had made. The women entered into the sepulchre, and missing the body of Jesus, Mary Magdalen ran to the eleven apostles, complaining that the body of our Lord was not to be found. Then Peter and John ran as fast as they could to see: for the unexpectedness of the relation, the wonder of the story, and the sadness of the person, moved some affections in them, which were kindled by the first principles and sparks of faith, but were not made actual and definite, because the faith was not raised to a flame: they looked into the sepulchre, and finding not the body there, they returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back; and the women who staid, weeping, for their Lord's body, "saw two angels sitting in white, the one at the head, and the other at the feet:" at which unexpected sight, they "trembled, and bowed themselves;" but an angel bid them "not to fear," telling them, that "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, was also risen, and was not there:" and called to mind what Jesus had told them in Galilee, concerning his crucifixion, and resurrection the third day.

2. And "Mary Magdalen turned herself back, and saw Jesus; but supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." But "Jesus said unto her, Mary!" Then she knew his voice, and, with ecstasy of joy and wonder, was ready to have crushed his feet with her embraces: but he commanded her "not to touch him," but "go to his brethren, and say, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and your God." Mary departed with satisfaction, beyond the joys of a victory or a full vintage, and told these things to the apostles; but the narration seemed to them as talk of abused and fantastic persons. About the same time, Jesus also appeared unto Simon Peter. Towards the declining of the day, two of his disciples going to Emmaus, sad, and discoursing of the late occurrences, Jesus puts himself into their company, and upbraids their incredulity; and "expounds the Scriptures, that Christ ought to suffer, and rise again the third day," and "in the breaking of bread disappeared;" and so was "known to them" by vanishing away, whom present they knew not. And instantly they hasted to Jerusalem, and told the apostles what had happened.

3. And while they were there, that is, "the same day at evening, when the apostles were assembled," all save Thomas, "secretly, for fear of the Jews, the doors being shut, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them. They were exceedingly troubled, supposing it had been a spirit." But Jesus confuted them by the philosophy of their senses, by feeling his flesh and bones, which spirits have not. For he gave them his benediction, "showing them his hands and his feet." At which sight they rejoiced with exceeding joy, and began to be restored to their indefinite hopes of some future felicity, by the return of their Lord to life: and there he first "breathed on them, giving them the Holy Ghost," and performing the promise twice made before his death; the promise of the keys, or of "binding and loosing;" saying, "whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." And that was the second part of clerical power, with which Jesus instructed his disciples, in order to their great commission of preaching and government ecclesiastical. These things were told to Thomas, but he believed not, and resolved against the belief of it, unless he might "put his finger into his hands, and his hand into his side." Jesus, therefore, on the octaves of his resurrection, appeared again to the apostles met together, and makes demonstration to Thomas, in conviction and reproof of his unbelief, promising a special benediction to all succeeding ages of the church; for they are such who "saw not, and yet have believed."

4. But Jesus, at his early appearing, had sent an order by the women, that the disciples should go into Galilee; and they did so after a few days. And Simon Peter being there, went a fishing, and six other of the apostles with him, to the sea of Tiberias, where they "laboured all night and caught nothing." Towards "the morning, Jesus appeared to them," and bade them "cast the net on the right side of the ship;" which they did, and "enclosed an hundred and fifty-three great fishes:" by which prodigious draught, John, the beloved disciple, perceived "it was the Lord." At which instant "Peter threw himself into the sea," and went to Jesus; and when the rest were come to shore, they dined with broiled fish. After dinner, Jesus, taking care for those scattered sheep, which were dispersed over the face of the earth, that he might gather them into one sheepfold under one Shepherd, asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? Peter answered, Yea, Lord? thou, that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee. Then Jesus said unto him, Feed my lambs." And Jesus asked him the same question, and gave him the same precept, the second time, and the third time: for it was a considerable and a weighty employment, upon which Jesus was willing to spend all his endearments and stock of affections that Peter owed him, even upon the care of his little flock. And after the intrusting of this charge to him, he told him, that the reward he should have in this world, should be a sharp and an honourable martyrdom;

Cùm rex ille fortissimus,
Mortis confractis viribus,
Pede conculcans Tartara,
Solvit à pœna miseros.

Ille qui clausus lapide
Custoditur sub milite,
Triumphans pompâ nobili,
Victor surgit de funere.—Hymn. Paschal.

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and, withal, checks Peter's curiosity, in busying himself about the temporal accidents of other men, and inquiring what should become of John, the beloved disciple. Jesus answered his question with some sharpness of reprehension, and no satisfaction: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Then they fancied that he should not die; but they were mistaken, for the intimation was expounded and verified by St. John's surviving the destruction of Jerusalem; for, after the attempts of persecutors, and the miraculous escape of prepared torments, he died a natural death, in a good old age.

5. After this, Jesus having appointed a solemn meeting for all the brethren that could be collected from the dispersion, and named a certain mountain in Galilee, 'appeared to five hundred brethren at once;" and this was his most public and solemn manifestation; and while some doubted, Jesus came according to the designation, and spake to the eleven; sent them to "preach to all the world repentance, and remission of sins in his name;" promising "to be with them to the end of the world." He appeared also unto James, but at what time is uncertain; save that there is something concerning it in the gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes of Berea used, and which it is likely themselves added out of report; for there is nothing of it in our Greek copies. The words are these: "When the Lord had given the linen, in which he was wrapped, to the servant of the high priest, he went and appeared unto James. For James had vowed, after he received the Lord's supper, that he would eat no bread till he saw the Lord risen from the grave. Then the Lord called for bread; he blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to James the Just, and said, 'My brother, eat bread, for the Son of man is risen from the sleep of death.'" So that, by this, it should seem to be done upon the day of the resurrection. But the relation of it by St. Paul, puts it between the appearance which he made to the five hundred, and that last to the apostles, when he was to ascend into heaven. Last of all, when the apostles were "at dinner, he appeared to them, upbraiding their incredulity;" and "then he opened their understanding, that they might discern the sense of Scripture," and again commanded them to preach the gospel to all the world, giving them power "to do miracles, to cast out devils, to cure diseases;" and instituted the sacrament of baptism, which he commanded should, together with the sermons of the gospel, be administered "to all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then he led them into Judea, and they came to Bethany, and from thence to the mount Olivet; and he commanded them to "stay in Jerusalem," till the Holy Ghost, "the promise of the Father, should descend upon them," which should be accomplished in a few days; and then they should know the times, and the seasons, and all things necessary for their ministration and service, and propagation of the gospel. And while he "discoursed many things concerning the kingdom," behold a cloud came, and parted Jesus from them, and carried him, in their sight, up into heaven; where he sits at the right hand of God, blessed for ever. Amen.

6. While his apostles "stood gazing up to heaven," two angels appeared to them, and told them, that "Jesus should come in like manner as he was taken away," viz. with glory and majesty, and in the clouds, and with the ministry of angels. Amen. "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly."

Ad SECTION XVI.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening in the Interval after the Death of the holy Jesus, until his Resurrection.

1. THE holy Jesus promised to the blessed thief, that he should "that day be with him in Paradise;" which, therefore, was certainly a place or state of blessedness, because it was a promise; and in the society of Jesus, whose penal and afflictive part of his work of redemption was finished upon the cross. Our blessed Lord did not promise he should that day be with him in his kingdom, for that day it was not opened, and the everlasting doors of those interior recesses were to be shut till after the resurrection, that himself was to ascend thither, and make way for all his servants to enter, in the same method in which he went before us. Our blessed Lord "descended into hell," saith the creed of the apostles,[a] from the sermon of St. Peter, as he from the words of David, that is, into the state of separation and common receptacle of spirits, according to the style of Scripture. But the name of "hell" is no where in Scripture an appellative of the kingdom of Christ, of the place of final and supreme glory. But concerning the verification of our Lord's promise to the beatified thief, and his own state of separation, we must take what light we can from Scripture, and what we can from the doctrine of the primitive church. St. Paul had two great revelations;[b] he was "rapt up into Paradise," and he was "rapt up into the third heaven:" and these he calls "visions and revelations," not one, but divers: for Paradise is distinguished from the "heaven of the blessed," being itself a receptacle of holy souls, made illustrious with visitation of angels, and happy by being a repository for such spirits, who, at the day of judgment, shall go forth into eternal glory. In the interim, Christ hath trod all the paths before us, and this also we must pass through, to arrive at the courts of heaven. Justin Martyr said it was the doctrine of heretical persons, to say that the souls of the blessed, instantly upon the separation from their bodies, enter into the highest heaven.[c] And Irenæus makes heaven and the intermediate receptacle of souls, to be distinct places:[d] both blessed, but hugely differing in degrees. Tertullian is

[a] Symbolum Aquileiense, et ex eo Romanum hodiernum.

[b] —— Ubi duas magnas revelationes sibi obtigisse dixit Paulus, bisque in sublime se raptum; semel ad cœlum tertium, semel ad paradisum.—METHODIUS cont. Origen. apud Epiph. Idem ait Moses Barcephas, lib. de Paradiso, c. 7. p. 4.

[c] Dial. adv. Tryphon.

[d] Lib. v. c. 3.

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dogmatical in the assertion,[e] that till the voice of the great archangel be heard, and as long as Christ sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for the church, so long blessed souls must expect the assembling of their brethren, the great congregation of the church, that they may all pass, from their outer courts into the inward tabernacle, the holy of holies, to the throne of God. And as it is certain, that no soul could enter into glory before our Lord entered, by whom we hope to have access: so it is most agreeable to the proportion of the mysteries of our redemption, that we believe the entrance into glory to have been made by our Lord at his glorious ascension, and that his soul went not thither before then, to come back again, to be contracted into the span of humanity, and dwell forty days in his body upon earth. But that he should return from Paradise, that is, from the common receptacle of departed spirits, who died in the love of God, to earth again, had in it no lessening of his condition, since himself, in mercy, called back Lazarus from thence, and some others also returned to live a life of grace, which, in all senses, is less than the least of glories. Sufficient it is to us, that all holy souls, departing, go into the hands, that is, into the custody of our Lord; that "they rest from their labours;"[f] that "their works shall follow them," and overtake them, too, at the day of judgment; that they are happy presently; that they are visited by angels;[g] that God sends, as he pleases, excellent irradiations and types of glory to entertain them in their mansions; that their condition is secured: but "the crown of righteousness is laid up"[h] against the great day of judgment, and then to be produced and given to St. Paul, and "to all that love the coming of our Lord;" that is, to all who either here in duty, or in their receptacles, with joy and certain hope, long for the revelation of that day. At the day of judgment, Christ will "send the angels, and they shall gather together the elect from the four winds;"[i] and all the refuse of men, evil persons, they shall "throw into everlasting burning." Then our blessed Lord shall call to the elect to enter into the kingdom, and reject the cursed into the portion of devils; "for whom the fire" is but now prepared in the interval. For "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," saith St. Paul, "that every man may receive in his body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil."[k] Out of the body the reception of the reward is not. And, therefore, St. Peter affirms, that "God hath delivered the evil angels unto chains of darkness, to be reserved into judgment."[l] And St. Jude saith, that "the angels which kept not their first faith, but left their first habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."[m] And, therefore, the devils expostulated with our blessed Saviour, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?"[n] And the same also he does to evil men, "reserving the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished."[o] For since the actions which are to be judged, are the actions of the whole man, so also must be the judicature. And our blessed Saviour intimated this to his apostles; "In my Father's house are many mansions: but I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go away, I will come again, and take you unto me; that where I am, there ye may be also."[p] At Christ's second coming this is to be performed.[q] Many outer courts, many different places, or different states, there may be: and yet there is a place whither holy souls shall arrive at last, which was not then ready for us, and was not to be entered into, until the entrance of our Lord had made the "preparation:" and that is, certainly, "the highest heaven," called, by St. Paul, "the third heaven;" because the other receptacles were ready, and full of holy souls, patriarchs, and prophets, and holy men of God; concerning whom St. Paul affirms expressly, that "the fathers received not the promises: God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect:"[r] therefore, certain it is, that their condition was a state of imperfection, and yet they were placed in Paradise, "in Abraham's bosom;" and thither Christ went, and the blessed thief attended him. And then it was that Christ made their condition better: for though still it be a place of relation in order to something beyond it, yet the term and object of their hope is changed: they sat in the regions of darkness, expecting that great promise made to Adam and the patriarchs, the promise of the Messias; but when he that was promised came, he "preached to the spirits in prison," he communicated to them the mysteries of the gospel, "the secrets of the kingdom," the things "hidden from eternal ages," and taught them to look up to the glories purchased by his passion, and made the term of their expectation be his second coming, and the objects of their hope the glories of the beatific vision. And although the state of separation is sometimes in Scripture called heaven, and sometimes hell, (for these words in Scripture are of large significations,) yet it is never called "the third heaven," nor "the hell of the damned:" for although, concerning it, nothing is clearly revealed, or what is their portion till the day of judgment;

[e] Lib. de Anima; et de Præscript. Idem sentiunt Scriptor Resp. ad Orthod. q. 76. S. Greg. Naz. orat. 10. S. Chrysost. hom. 15. in Matt. S. Ambr. in Micheam, Cyrilli Liturg. Epiphan. ep. apud S. Hier. Theodoretus, Theophylactus, et Vet. passim.

[f] Revel. xiv. 13.

[g] Just. Mart. 75. inter quæst. Gentiles ait, bonos statim duci a morte ad Paradisum, ubi consuetudo et aspectus est Angelorum et visus Christi Salvatoris.

[h] 2 Tim. iv. 8. [i] Matt. xiii. 41. et xxiv. 31.

[k] 2 Cor. v. 10. "Ινα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ ἴδια τοῦ σώματος· sic quidam Cod. τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος· sic communiter, et rectius.

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 4. [m] Jude 6. [n] Matt. viii. 29.

[o] 2 Pet. ii. 9. Nec tamen quisquam putet animas post mortem protinus judicari: nam omnes in una communique custodia detinentur, donec tempus adveniat, atque maximus judex meritorum faciat examen.—LACTAN. lib. vii. c. 21.

[p] John xiv. 2, 3.

[q] Satiabor cùm apparueris. Psal. xvii. 15.

[r] Heb. xi. 40. Irenæ. lib. v. adv. Hæres. ad fin. Origen. hom. 7. in Levit. Chrys. hom. 39. in 1 Cor. Theodoret. Theophylact. Oecumenius in Hebr. xi. S. Aug. lib. i. Retract. c. 14. Victorin. Mart. in c. 6. Apoc. Ambros. de Bono Mortis, c. 10. et 11.

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yet it is intimated in a parable, that between good and evil spirits, even in the state of separation, there is distance of place: certain it is, there is great distance of condition; and as the holy souls, in their regions of light, are full of love, joy, hope, and longing for the coming of the great day, so the accursed do expect it with an insupportable amazement, and are presently tormented with apprehensions of the future. Happy are they, that, through Paradise, pass into the kingdom, who, from their highest hope, pass to the greatest charity, from the state of a blessed separation, to the mercies and gentle sentence of "the day of judgment,"[s] which St. Paul prayed to God to grant Onesiphorus; and more explicitly for the Thessalonians, "that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus."[t] And I pray God to grant the same to me, and all faithful people whatsoever.

2. As soon as the Lord had "given up his spirit" into the hands of God, "the veil of the temple was rent," the angels, guardians of the place, deserted it, the rites of Moses were laid open, and the enclosures of the tabernacle were disparked, "the earth trembled, the graves were opened," and all the old world, and the old religion, were so shaken towards their first chaos, that if God had not supported the one, and reserved the other for an honourable burial, the earth had left to support her children, and the synagogue had been thrown out to an inglorious exposition and contempt. But yet in these symbols these were changed from their first condition, and passed into a new dominion; all "old things passed away, and all things became new; the earth and the heavens" were reckoned as "a new creation," they passed into another kingdom, under Christ their Lord; and as before the creatures were servants of human necessities, they now become servants of election, and in order to the ends of grace, as before of nature; Christ having now the power to dispose of them in order to his kingdom, and by the administration of his own wisdom. And at the instant of these accidents, God so determined the persuasions of men, that they referred these prodigies to the honour of Christ, and took them as testimonies of that truth, for the affirmation of which the high priest had condemned our dearest Lord: and although the heart of the priest rent not,[u] even then when rocks did tear in pieces; yet the people, who saw the passion, "smote their breasts, and returned," and confessed Christ.

3. The graves of the dead were opened at the death, but the dead bodies of the saints that slept arose not till the resurrection of our Lord; for he was "the first fruits,"[x] and they followed him as instant witnesses, to publish the resurrection of their Head, which, it is possible, they declared to those to whom they "appeared in the holy city." And amongst these, the curiosity, or pious credulity, of some, have supposed Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, therefore, were careful to be buried in the land of promise, as having some intimation or hope, that they might be partakers of the earliest glories of the Messias, in whose faith and distant expectation they lived and died. And this calling up of company from their graves did publish to all the world, not only that the Lord himself was risen, according to his so frequent and repeated predictions, but that he meant to raise up all his servants, and that all who believe in him should be partakers of the resurrection.[y]

4. When the soldiers observed that Jesus was dead, out of spite and impotent ineffective malice, one of them pierced his holy side with a spear; and the rock being smitten, it gushed out with "water and blood," streaming forth two sacraments to refresh the church, and opening a gate that all his brethren might enter in, and dwell in the heart of God. And so great a love had our Lord, that he suffered his heart to be opened, to show, that as Eve was formed from the side of Adam, so was the church to be from the side of her Lord, receiving from thence life and spiritual nutriment; which he ministered in so great abundance, and suffered himself to be pierced, that all his blood did stream over us, until he made the fountain dry, and reserved nothing of that by which he knew his church was "to live, and move, and have her being." Thus the stream of blood issued out to become a fountain for the sacrament of the chalice, and water gushed out, to fill the fonts of baptism and repentance. The blood, being the testimony of the Divine love, calls upon us to die for his love, when he requires it; and the noise of the water calls upon us to purify our spirits, and present our conscience to Christ "holy and pure, without spot or wrinkle." The blood running upon us, makes us to be of the cognation and family of God; and the water quenches the flames of hell, and the fires of concupiscence.

5. The friends and disciples of the holy Jesus, having devoutly composed his body to burial, anointed it, washed it, and condited it with spices and perfumes, laid it in a sepulchre hewn from a rock in a garden; which, saith Euthymius, was therefore done, to represent, that we were, by this death, returned to Paradise, and the gardens of pleasures and Divine favours, from whence, by the prevarication of Adam, man was expelled. Here he finished the work of his passion, as he had begun it in a garden; and the place of sepulchre, being a rock, serves the ends of pious succeeding ages: for the place remains in all changes of government, of wars, of earthquakes, and ruder accidents, to this day, as a memorial of the sepulchre of our dearest Lord, as a sensible and proper confirmation of the persuasions of some persons, and as an entertainment of their pious fancy and religious affections.

[s] 2 Tim. i. 18.

[t] 1 Thess. v. 23. Vide Irenæum in hunc locum, lib. v. c. 6. adv. Hæres. ubi probat, absque unione corporis, animæ, et spiritus, hominem non esse.

[u] S. Ambros. in Lucam. lib. 10.

[x] Euseb. Emiss. hom. 6. de Pasch.

——— tumuloque inferna refringens
Regna, resurgentes secum jubet ire sepultos.
PRUDENT. Apoth.

[y] Ἐλυτροῦντο πάντες οἱ δίκαιοι, οὓς κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος. —S. CYR. Catech. et Chrys. hom. 88. in xxvii. Matt.

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6. But now it was, that in the dark and undiscerned mansions there was a scene of the greatest joy and the greatest horror represented, which yet was known since the first falling of the morning-stars. Those holy souls, whom the prophet Zechariah calls "prisoners of hope, lying in the lake where there is no water,"[z] that is, no constant stream of joy to refresh their present condition, (yet supported with certain showers and gracious visitations from God, and illuminations of their hope,) now that they saw their Redeemer come to change their condition, and to improve it into the neighbourhoods of glory and clearer revelation, must needs have the joy of intelligent and beatified understandings, of redeemed captives, of men forgiven after the sentence of death, of men satisfied after a tedious expectation, enjoying and seeing their Lord, whom, for so many ages, they had expected. But the accursed spirits, seeing the darkness of their prison shine with a new light, and their empire invaded, and their retirements of horror discovered, wondered how a man durst venture thither, or if he were a God, how he should come to die. But the holy Jesus was like that body of light, receiving into himself the reflection of all the lesser rays of joy, which the patriarchs felt, and being united to his fountain of felicity, apprehended it yet more glorious. He now felt the effects of his bitter passion to return upon him in comforts; every hour of which was abundant recompence for three hours' passion upon the cross, and became to us a great precedent, to invite us to a toleration of the acts of repentance, mortification, and martyrdom, and that in times of suffering we live upon the stock and expense of faith, as remembering that these few moments of infelicity are infinitely paid with every minute of glory, and yet that the glory, which is certainly consequent, is so lasting and perpetual, that it were enough in a lower joy to make amends, by its continuation of eternity. And let us but call to mind what thoughts we shall have, when we die, or are dead; how we shall then, without prejudice, consider, that if we had done our duty, the trouble and the affliction would now be past, and nothing remain but pleasures and felicities eternal,[a] and how infinitely happy we shall then be, if we have done our duty, and how miserable, if not; all the pleasures of sin disappearing, and nothing surviving but a certain and everlasting torment. Let us carry always the same thoughts with us, which must certainly then intervene, and we shall meet the holy Jesus, and partake of his joys, which overflowed his holy soul, when he first entered into the possession of those excellent fruits and effects of his passion.

7. When the third day was come, the soul of Jesus returned from Paradise, and the visitation of separate spirits, and re-entered into his holy body, which he, by his Divine power, did redintegrate, filling his veins with blood, healing all the wounds, excepting those five of his hands, feet, and side, which he reserved as trophies of his victory, and argument of his passion. And as he had comforted the souls of the fathers with the presence of his Spirit; so now he saw it to be time to bring comfort to his holy mother, to re-establish the tottering faith of his disciples, to verify his promise to make demonstration of his Divinity, to lay some superstructures of his church upon the foundation of his former sermons, to instruct them in the mysteries of his kingdom, to prepare them for the reception of the Holy Ghost: and as he had, in his state of separation, triumphed over hell, so, in his resurrection, he set his foot upon death, and brought it under his dominion; so that although it was not yet destroyed, yet it is made his subject: it hath, as yet, the condition of the Gibeonites, who were not banished out of the land, but they were made "drawers of water and hewers of wood;" so is death made instrumental to Christ's kingdom, but it abides still, and shall till the day of judgment, but shall serve the ends of our Lord, and promote the interests of eternity, and do benefit to the church.

8. And it is considerable, that our blessed Lord having told them, that after three days he would rise again, yet he shortened the time as much as was possible, that he might verify his own prediction, and yet make his absence the least troublesome: he rises "early in the morning the first day of the week:" for so our dearest Lord abbreviates the days of our sorrow, and lengthens the years of our consolation; for he knows that a day of sorrow seems a year, and a year of joy passes like a day; and, therefore, God lessens the one and lengthens the other, to make this perceived and that supportable. Now the temple, which the Jews destroyed, God raised up in six and thirty hours: but this "second temple" was more glorious than the first; for now it was clothed with robes of glory, with clarity, agility, and immortality: and though, like Moses descending from the mount, he wore a veil, that the greatness of his splendour might not render him unapt for conversation with his servants; yet the holy Scripture affirms, that he was "now no more to see corruption;" meaning, that now he was separate from the passibility and affections of human bodies, and could suffer St. Thomas to thrust his hand into the wound of his side, and his finger into the holes of his hands, without any grief or smart.

9. But although the graciousness and care of the Lord had prevented all diligence, and satisfied all desires, returning to life before the most forward faith could expect him; yet there were three Maries went to the grave so early, that they prevented the rising of the sun; and though, with great obedience they staid till the end of the sabbath, yet, as soon as that was done, they had other parts of duty and affection, which called with greatest importunity to be speedily satisfied. And if obedience had not bound the feet of love, they had gone the day before; but they became to us admirable patterns of obedi-

[z] Zech. ix. 11, 12.

[a] Ἄν τι πράξῃς μετὰ πόνου καλόν, ὁ μὲν πόνος ὄιχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μίνει· ἄν τι ποιήσῃς αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ ὄιχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μίνει.—MUSONIUS apud A. Gellium, lib. xvi. c. 1.

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ence to the Divine commandments. For though love were "stronger than death," yet obedience was stronger than love, and made a rare dispute in the spirits of those holy women, in which the flesh and the spirit were not the litigants, but the spirit and the spirit; and they resisted each other, as the angel-guardian of the Jews resisted the tutelar angel of Persia, each striving who should with most love and zeal perform their charge, and God determined. And so he did here too. For the law of the sabbath was then a Divine commandment; and although piety to the dead, and to such a dead, was ready to force their choice to do violence to their will, bearing them up on wings of desire to the grave of the Lord, yet at last they reconciled love with obedience. For they had been taught, that love is best expressed in keeping of the Divine commandments. But now they were at liberty; and sure enough they made use of its first minute: and going so early to seek Christ, they were sure they should find him.

10. The angels descended guardians of the sepulchre; for God sent his guards too, and they affrighted the watch appointed by Pilate and the priests: but when the women came, they spake like comforters, full of sweetness and consolation, laying aside their affrighting glories, as knowing it is the will of their Lord, that they should minister good to them that love him. But a conversation with angels could not satisfy them, who came to look for the Lord of the angels, and found him not: and when the Lord was pleased to appear to Mary Magdalen, she was so swallowed up with love and sorrow, that she entered into her joy, and perceived it not; she saw the Lord, and knew him not. For so, from the closets of darkness, they that immediately stare upon the sun, perceive not the beauties of the light, and feel nothing but amazement. But the voice of the Lord opened her eyes, and she knew him, and worshipped him, but was denied to touch him, and commanded to tell the apostles: for therefore God ministers to us comforts and revelations, not that we may dwell in the sensible fruition of them ourselves alone, but that we communicate the grace to others. But when the other women were returned and saw the Lord, then they were all together admitted to the embracement, and to kiss the feet of Jesus. For God hath his opportunities and periods, which at another time he denies; and we must then rejoice in it when he vouchsafes it, and submit to his Divine will when he denies it.

11. These good women had the first fruits of the apparition: for their forward love, and the passion of their religion, made greater haste to entertain a grace, and was a greater endearment of their persons to our Lord, than a more sober, reserved, and less active spirit. This is more safe, but that is religious; this goes to God by the way of understanding, that by the will; this is supported by discourse, that by passions; this is the sobriety of the apostles, the other was the zeal of the holy women; and because a strong fancy and an earnest passion, fixed upon holy objects, are the most active and forward instruments of devotion, as devotion is of love, therefore we find God hath made great expressions of his acceptance of such dispositions. And women, and less knowing persons, and tender dispositions, and pliant natures, will make up a greater number in heaven, than the severe, and wary, and inquiring people, who sometimes love because they believe, and believe because they can demonstrate, but never believe because they love. When a great understanding and a great affection meet together, it makes a saint great like an apostle; but they do not well, who make abatement of their religious passions by the severity of their understanding. It is no matter by which we are brought to Christ, so we love him and obey him; but if the production admit of degrees, that instrument is the most excellent which produces the greatest love: and although discourse, and a sober spirit, be in itself the best, yet we do not always suffer that to be a parent of as great religion as the good women make their fancy, their softness, and their passion.

12. Our blessed Lord appeared next to Simon: and though he and John ran forth together, and St. John outran Simon, although Simon Peter had denied and forsworn his Lord, and St. John never did, and followed him to his passion and his death; yet Peter had the favour of seeing Jesus first. Which some spiritual persons understand as a testimony that penitent sinners have accidental eminences and privileges sometimes indulged to them beyond the temporal graces of the just and innocent, as being such who not only need defensatives against the remanent and inherent evils even of repented sins, and their aptnesses to relapse; but also because those who are true penitents, who understand the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and that for a sinner to pass from death to life, from the state of sin into pardon and the state of grace, is a greater gift,[b] and a more excellent and improbable mutation, than for a just man to be taken into glory, —out of gratitude to God, and endearment for so great a change, added to fear of returning to such danger and misery, will re-enforce all their industry, and double their study, and observe more diligently, and watch more carefully, and "redeem the time," and make amends for their omissions, and oppose a good to the former evils, beside the duties of the present employment; and then, commonly, the life of a holy penitent is more holy, active, zealous, and impatient of vice, and more rapacious of virtue and holy actions, and arises to greater degrees of sanctity, than the even and moderate affections of just persons, who (as our blessed Saviour's expression is) "need no repentance," that is, no change of state, nothing but a perseverance, and an improvement of degrees. "There is more joy in heaven, before the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons that need it not:"[c] for, "where sin hath abounded, there doth grace superabound;" and that makes joy in heaven.

13. The holy Jesus, having received the affections of his most passionate disciples, the women

[b] Majus est, peccatorem ex peccato in gratiam migrare, quàm ex hoc mundo in cœlum.—S. AUGUST.

[c] Luke xv. 7.

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and St. Peter, puts himself upon the way into the company of two good men going to Emmaus, with troubled spirits and a reeling faith, shaking all its upper building, but leaving some of its foundation firm. To them the Lord discourses of the necessity of the death and resurrection of the Messias, and taught them not to take estimate of the counsels of God by the designs and proportions of man: for God, by ways contrary to human judgment, brings to pass the purposes of his eternal providence. The glories of Christ were not made pompous by human circumstances; his kingdom was spiritual: he was to enter into felicities through the gates of death; he refused to do miracles before Herod, and yet did them before the people; he confuted his accusers by silence, and did not descend from the cross, when they offered to believe in him, if he would; but left them to be persuaded by greater arguments of his power, the miraculous circumstances of his death, and the glories of his resurrection; and, by walking in the secret paths of Divine election, hath commanded us to adore his footsteps, to admire and revere his wisdom, to be satisfied with all the events of providence, and to rejoice in him, if by afflictions he makes us holy, if by persecutions he supports and enlarges his church, if by death he brings us to life; so we arrive at the communion of his felicities, we must let him choose the way; it being sufficient that he is our guide, and our support, and our "exceeding great reward." For therefore Christ preached to the two disciples, going to Emmaus, the way of the cross, and the necessity of that passage, that the wisdom of God might be glorified, and the conjectures of man ashamed. But whilst his discourse lasted, they knew him not; but, in the breaking of bread, he discovered himself. For he turned their meal into a sacrament, and their darkness to light; and having to his sermon added the sacrament, opened all their discerning faculties, the eyes of their body, and their understanding too; to represent to us, that when we are blessed with the opportunities of both those instruments, we want no exterior assistance to guide us in the way to the knowing and enjoying of our Lord.

14. But the apparitions which Jesus made, were all upon the design of laying the foundation of all christian graces; for the begetting and establishing faith, and an active confidence in their persons, and building them up on the great fundamentals of the religion. And therefore he appointed a general meeting upon a mountain in Galilee, that the number of witnesses might not only disseminate the fame, but establish the article, of the resurrection; for upon that are built all the hopes of a christian; and "if the dead rise not, then are we of all men most miserable," in quitting the present possessions, and entertaining injuries and affronts without hopes of reparation. But we lay two gages in several repositories; the body in the bosom of the earth, the soul in the bosom of God: and as we here live by faith, and lay them down with hope; so the resurrection is a restitution of them both, and a state of re-union. And therefore, although the glory of our spirits, without the body, were joy great enough to make compensation for more than the troubles of all the world; yet, because one shall not be glorified without the other, they being of themselves incomplete substances, and God having revealed nothing clearly concerning actual and complete felicities till the day of judgment, when it is promised our bodies shall rise; therefore it is, that the resurrection is the great article upon which we rely, and which Christ took so much care to prove and ascertain to so many persons, because, if that should be disbelieved with which all our felicities are to be received, we have nothing to establish our faith, or entertain our hope, or satisfy our desires, or make retribution for that state of secular inconveniences, in which, by the necessities of our nature, and the humility and patience of our religion, we are engaged.

15. But I consider, that holy Scripture only instructs us concerning "the life of this world," and "the life of the resurrection, the life of grace," and "the life of glory," both in the body, that is, a life of the whole man; and whatsoever is spoken of the soul, considers it as an essential part of man, relating to his whole constitution, not as it is of itself an intellectual and separate substance; for all its actions which are separate and removed from the body, are relative and incomplete. Now, because the soul is an incomplete substance, and created in relation to the body, and is but a part of the whole man, if the body were as eternal and incorruptible as the soul, yet the separation of the one from the other would be, as now it is, that which we call "natural death;" and supposing that God should preserve the body for ever, or restore it at the day of judgment to its full substance and perfect organs, yet the man would be dead for ever, if the soul for ever should continue separate from the body. So that the other life, that is, the state of resurrection, is a re-uniting soul and body. And although, in a philosophical sense, the resurrection is of the body, that is, a restitution of our flesh and blood and bones, and is called "resurrection," as the entrance into the state of resurrection may have the denomination of the whole; yet, in the sense of Scripture, the resurrection is the restitution of our life, the renovation of the whole man, the state of re-union; and until that be, the man is not, but he is dead, and only his essential parts are deposited and laid up in trust: and, therefore, whatsoever the soul does or perceives in its incomplete condition, is but to it as embalming and honourable funerals to the body, and a safe monument to preserve it in order to a living again; and the felicities of the interval are wholly in order to the next life. And therefore, if there were to be no resurrection, as these intermedial joys should not be at all; so, as they are, they are but relative and incomplete: and therefore all our hopes, all our felicities, depend upon the resurrection; without it we should never be persons, men or women; and then the state of separation could be nothing but a fantasm, trees ever in blossom, never bearing fruit, corn for ever in the blade, eggs always in the shell, a hope eternal, never to pass into fruition, that is, for ever to be deluded, for

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ever to be miserable. And therefore it was an elegant expression of St. Paul,[d] "Our life is hid with Christ in God;" that is, our life is passed into custody, the dust of our body is numbered, and the spirit is refreshed, visited, and preserved in celestial mansions: but it is not properly called a life; for all this while the man is dead, and shall then live, when Christ produces this hidden life at the great day of restitution. But our faith of all this article is well wrapped up in the words of St. John:[e] "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The middle state is not it which Scripture hath propounded to our faith, or to our hope; the reward is then when Christ shall appear: but, in the mean time, the soul can converse with God and with angels, just as the holy prophets did in their dreams, in which they received great degrees of favour and revelation.[f] But this is not to be reckoned any more than an entrance or a waiting for the state of our felicity. And since the glories of heaven is the great fruit of election, we may consider that the body is not predestinate, nor the soul, alone, but the whole man; and, until the parts embrace again in an essential complexion, it cannot be expected either of them should receive the portion of the predestinate. But the article and the event of future things is rarely set in order by St. Paul:[g] "But ye are come unto the mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all;" and then follows, after this "general assembly," after "the Judge of all" appears, "to the spirits of just men made perfect;" that is, re-united to their bodies, and entering into glory. The beginning of the contrary opinion brought some new practices and appendant persuasions into the church, or at least promoted them much. For those doctors, who, receding from the primitive belief of this article, taught that the glories of heaven are fully communicated to the souls before the day of judgment, did also upon that stock teach the invocation of saints, whom they believed to be received into glory, and insensibly also brought in the opinion of purgatory, that the less perfect souls might be glorified in the time that they assigned them. But the safer opinion, and more agreeable to piety, is that which I have now described from Scripture and the purest ages of the church.

16. When Jesus appeared to the apostles, he gave them his peace for a benediction; and when he departed, he left them peace for a legacy, and gave them, according to two former promises, the power of making peace, and reconciling souls to God by a ministerial act; so conveying his Father's mercy, which himself procured by his passion, and actuates by his intercession and the giving of his grace, that he might comply with our infirmities, and minister to our needs by instruments even and proportionate to ourselves; making our brethren the conduits of his grace, that the excellent effect of the Spirit might not descend upon us, as the law upon mount Sinai, in expresses of greatness and terror, but in earthen vessels, and images of infirmity: so God manifesting his power in the smallness of the instrument, and descending to our needs, not only in giving the grace of pardon, but also in the manner of its ministration. And I meditate upon the greatness of this mercy, by comparing this grace of God, and the blessing of the judgment and sentence we receive at the hand of the church, with the judgment which God makes at the hour of death upon them, who have despised this mercy, and neglected all the other parts of their duty. The one is a judgment of mercy, the other of vengeance: in the one the devil is the accuser, and heaven and earth bear witness; in the other, the penitent sinner accuses himself: in that, the sinner gets a pardon; in the other, he finds no remedy: in that, all his good deeds are remembered and returned, and his sins are blotted out; in the other, all his evil deeds are represented with horror and a sting, and remain for ever: in the first, the sinner changes his state for a state of grace, and only smarts in some temporal austerities and acts of exterior mortification; in the second, his temporal estate is changed to an eternity of pain: in the first, the sinner suffers the shame of one man or one society, which is sweetened by consolation, and homilies of mercy and health; in the latter, all his sins are laid open before all the world, and himself confounded in eternal amazement and confusions: in the judgment of the church, the sinner is honoured by all for returning to the bosom of his mother, and the embraces of his heavenly Father; in the judgment of vengeance, he is laughed at by God, and mocked by accursed spirits, and perishes without pity: in this, he is prayed for by none, helped by none, comforted by none, and he makes himself a companion of devils to everlasting ages; but in the judgment of repentance and tribunal of the church, the penitent sinner is prayed for by a whole army of militant saints, and causes joy to all the church triumphant. And to establish this tribunal in the church, and to transmit pardon to penitent sinners, and a salutary judgment upon the person and the crime, and to appoint physicians and guardians of the soul, was one of the designs and mercies of the resurrection of Jesus. And let not any christian men, either by false opinion, or an unbelieving spirit, or an incurious apprehension, undervalue or neglect this ministry, which Christ hath so sacredly and solemnly established. Happy is he that dashes his sins against the rock upon which the church is built; that the church, gathering up the planks and fragments of the shipwreck, and the shivers of the broken heart, may re-unite them, pouring oil into the wounds

[d] Coloss. iii. 3. [e] 1 John iii. 2.

[f] "Οταν ἐν τῷ ὑπνοῦν καθ' ἑαυτὴν γενήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ, τότε τὴν ἰδίαν ἀπολαβοῦσα φύσιν, προμαντεύεταί τέ καὶ προαγορεύει τὰ μέλλοντα. Τοιαύτη δέ ἐστι καὶ ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὸν θάνατον χαρίζεσθαι τῶν σωμάτων.—ARIST. apud Sextum Empiric.

[g] Heb. xii. 22, 23.

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made by the blows of sin, and restoring with meekness, gentleness, care, counsel, and authority, persons overtaken in a fault. For that act of ministry is not ineffectual, which God hath promised shall be ratified in heaven; and that authority is not contemptible, which the holy Jesus conveyed by breathing upon his church the Holy Ghost. But Christ intended that those, whom he had made guides of our souls, and judges of our consciences in order to counsel and ministerial pardon, should also be used by us in all cases of our souls, and that we go to heaven the way he hath appointed, that is, by offices and ministries ecclesiastical.

17. When our blessed Lord had so confirmed the faith of the church, and appointed an ecclesiastical ministry, he had but one work more to do upon earth, and that was the institution of the holy sacrament of baptism, which he ordained as a solemn initiation and mysterious profession of the faith, upon which the church is built; making it a solemn publication of our profession, the rite of stipulation or entering covenant with our Lord, the solemnity of the paction evangelical, in which we undertake to be disciples to the holy Jesus; that is, to believe his doctrine, to fear his threatenings, to rely upon his promises, and to obey his commandments all the days of our life; and he, for his part, actually performs much, and promises more;[h] he takes off all the guilt of our preceding days, purging our souls, and making them clean, as in the day of innocence; promising withal, that if we perform our undertaking, and remain in the state in which he now puts us, he will continually assist us with his Spirit,[i] prevent and attend us with his grace; he will deliver us from the power of the devil; he will keep our souls in merciful, joyful, and safe custody, till the great day of the Lord; he will then raise our bodies from the grave; he will make them to be spiritual and immortal; he will re-unite them to our souls, and beatify both bodies and souls in his own kingdom, admitting them into eternal and unspeakable glories. All which that he might verify and prepare respectively, in the presence of his disciples he ascended into the bosom of God, and the eternal comprehensions of celestial glory.

[h] Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Eph. iv. 5, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Coloss. ii. 13. Gal. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who hast overcome death, and triumphed over all the powers of hell, darkness, sin, and the grave; manifesting the truth of thy promises, the power of thy divinity, the majesty of thy person, the rewards of thy glory, and the mercies and excellent designs of thy evangelical kingdom, by thy glorious and powerful resurrection; preserve my soul from eternal death, and make me to rise from the death of sin, and to live the life of grace; loving thy perfections, adoring thy mercy, pursuing the interest of thy kingdom; being united to the church, under thee our Head; conforming to thy holy laws; established in faith, entertained and confirmed with a modest, humble, and certain hope, and sanctified by charity; that I, engraving thee in my heart, and submitting to thee in my spirit, and imitating thee in thy glorious example, may be partaker of thy resurrection; which is my hope and my desire, the support of my faith, the object of my joy, and the strength of my confidence. In thee, holy Jesus, do I trust: I confess thy faith, I believe all that thou hast taught; I desire to perform all thy injunctions, and my own undertaking: my soul is in thy hand; do thou support and guide it, and pity my infirmities; and when thou shalt reveal thy great day, show to me the mercies and effects of thy advocation, and intercession, and redemption. "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God; for in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded." Thou art just, thou art merciful, thou art gracious and compassionate; thou hast done miracles and prodigies of favour, to me and all the world. Let not those great actions and sufferings be ineffective; but make me capable and receptive of thy mercies, and then I am certain to receive them. I am thine, O save me! thou art mine, O holy Jesus! O dwell with me for ever, and let me dwell with thee, adoring and praising the eternal glories of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

[i] Matt. xxviii. 20.

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CONTEMPLATIONS

OF

THE STATE OF MAN,

IN

THIS LIFE AND IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

TO THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

I HAVE soberly considered these holy and devout "Contemplations of the State of Man in this Life, and in that which is to come;" I never read any thing with more comfort, or which made a greater impression upon my soul. Therefore, hoping they may have the like effect upon others, I commend them to all persons, who desire happiness in this life, or blessedness in the future. Here thou mayest see the uncertainty of mortal life, the instability of human greatness, the fate of kingdoms, and the period of empires; the world's funeral, time laid in the dust, and the dread and horror of the last judgment. Here thou mayest have a prospect of the grandeur of heaven, the glory of the blessed, and the miseries and infelicities of the damned. The due consideration whereof will beget in thee holiness of life; nothing can be of more consequence, in these worst of days, to promote thy future happiness and glory. True piety sows the seeds of the most solid greatness. Men endowed with moral virtues, they are like diamonds, rich but unpolished; it is the fear of God that adds the true lustre, and sets them fair.

In the service of God, all the items of happiness and blessedness are summed up.

Dost thou desire riches? Serve God, and thou canst never be poor. Dost thou desire preferment? Live a holy and devout life, (as these Contemplations are the best introduction to it,) and thou shall go ἀπὸ χάριτος εἰς δόξαν, from grace to glory; grace is "Aurora gloriæ;" glory, nothing but a bright constellation of graces; and happiness, nothing but the quintessence of holiness. I shall not detain thee longer, but beg of God that these holy Contemplations may so influence thy soul, that thou mayest be made partaker of that eternal weight of glory, which is laid up for all those that love and serve him.

I am thy Friend, and

Servant in Christ Jesus,

B. HALE, D. D.

TO THE READER.

CANDID READER,

THE most learned and pious JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D., late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, in Ireland, having left these holy Contemplations in the hands of a worthy friend of his, with a full purpose to have printed them, if he had lived; but since it hath pleased God to take that devout and holy person to himself,—the better to advance devotion and sanctity of life, and to make men less in love with this frail life, and more with that which is eternal, it is thought fit to make them public. I beseech God to conduct us all, by the many helps and assistances which he hath been graciously pleased to afford us, to further us in piety and holiness of life, is the prayer of

Thy Friend,

ROBERT HARRIS.

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LIBER I.

CHAPTER I.

Contemplations on Time, and of the State of Man in this Life.

ALL philosophers which have thought of the nature of time, and which, with much subtlety, have disputed what it was; at length come to conclude, That they knew not what it is; the most they can reach unto is, That no time is long; and that can only be called time which is present, the which is but a moment; and how can that be said to be, since the only cause why it is, is because it shall not be, but is to pass into the *preterit;* so as we cannot affirm it to have a being. The being of time consists only of a succession of instants, or transitory being, subsisting only by a flux of moments, and changes as many faces as it contains instants; it slides out of his hands that strives to hold it: in naming of it, we lose it; so subtle it is by nature, that it were to weigh the fire, and measure the wind, to strive to stay this Proteus; in an instant he vanisheth; and while you think to show him with your finger, he is gone. We have only a moment in our power, and a moment which is lost in the very instant in which we think to grasp it. See then, what it is to trust unto human life, since it is a member of that which is so unconstant and rapid as time, which runs and passes away according to the course of the sun, and revolutions of the stars in the firmament. Know then, that death follows thee not with leaden feet; it runs after thee with a motion equal to that of the stars, whose swiftness is so prodigious, that, according to the more moderate account of Clavius, they run in one day more than a thousand seventeen millions and a half of leagues; and in one hour, more than forty-two millions. After this rate doth death pursue thee; how is it that thou tremblest not? How comes it that thou fearest not? Even life itself is given to us but by pieces, and mingles as many parts of death as there are of life; the age of infancy dies, when we enter into that of childhood; and that of childhood, when we become youths; that of youth, when we come to age of manhood; that, when we are old; and even old age itself expires, when we become decrepit: so that, during the same life, we find many deaths, and yet can hardly persuade ourselves that we shall die once. Let us cast our eyes upon our life past; let us consider what is become of our infancy, childhood, and youth; they are now dead in us: in the same manner shall those ages of our life, which are to come, die also. Neither do we only die in the principal times of life, but every hour, every moment, includes a kind of death in the succession and change of things. What content is there in life, which dies not by some succeeding sorrow? What affliction of pain, which is not followed by some equal, or greater grief than itself? Why are we grieved for what is absent, since it offends us being present? What we desire with impatience, being possessed, brings care and solicitude, grief and affliction.

The short time which any pleasure stays with us, it is not to be enjoyed wholly, and all at once, but tasted by parts; so as, when the second part comes, we feel not the pleasure of the first, lessening itself every moment, and we ourselves still dying with it; there being no instant of life, wherein death gains not ground of us; the motion of the heavens is but the swift turn of the spindle, which rolls up the thread of our lives; and a most fleet horse, upon which death runs post after us. There is no moment of life, wherein death hath not equal jurisdiction; and there is no point of life, which we divide not with death; so as, if well considered, we live but only one point, and have not life but for the present instant. Our years past are now vanished, and we enjoy no more of them than if we were already dead; the years to come we live not, and possess no more of them than if we were not yet born; yesterday is gone, to-morrow we know not what shall be; of to-day many hours are past, and we live them not; others are to come, and whether we shall live them or no, is uncertain; so that, all counts cast up, we live but this present moment; and in this also we are dying; so that we cannot say, that life is any thing but the half of an instant, an indivisible point, divided betwixt it and death.

With reason may this life be called the shadow of death, since, under the shadow of life, death steals upon us; and as at every step the body takes, the shadow takes another, so at every pace our lives move forward, death equally advances with it; and as eternity is ever in beginning, and is, therefore, a perpetual beginning; so life is ever ending and concluding, and may, therefore, be called a perpetual end, and a continual death. There is no pleasure in life, which although it should last twenty continued years, that cannot be present with us longer than an instant; and with such counterpoise, that in it death no less appeareth, than life is enjoyed.

If a man were lord of infinite worlds, and possessed infinite riches; if they were at last to end, and he to leave them, they were to be valued as nothing; and if all things temporal have this evil property, to fade and perish, they ought to have no more esteem, than if they were not.

O miserable condition of human nature! vain is all that we live without Christ; "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of the field." Where is now that comely visage? Where is now the dignity of the whole body, with which, as with a fair garment, the beauty of the soul was once

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clothed? Ah! pity! the lily is withered, the purple of the violet turned into paleness; therefore let us consider, what in time must become of us, and what, will we, or will not, cannot be far off; for should our lives exceed the term of nine hundred years, and that the days of Methusalem were bestowed upon us; yet all the length of life once past, (and pass it must,) were nothing; and betwixt him who lives but ten years, and him who lives a thousand, the end of life, and the unavoidable necessity of death once come, all is the same, save only he who lives longer, departs heavier laden with sins.

Vain are all honours. Vain are the applauses, the riches, and pleasures of life, which, being itself so short and so frail, makes all things vain which depend upon it, and so becomes itself a vanity of vanities, and an universal vanity. What account wouldest thou make of a tower founded upon a quicksand? Or what safety wouldest thou hope for in a ship bored with holes? Certainly thou oughtest to give no more esteem unto the things of this world, since they are founded upon a thing so unstable as this life. What can all human things be, since life, which sustains it, hath, according to David, no more consistence than smoke; or, according to Aquinas, than a little vapour, which in a moment vanisheth? Although it should endure a thousand years, yet, coming to an end, it were equal to that which lasted but a day; for as well the felicity of a long, as a short life, is but smoke and vanity, since they both pass away, and conclude in death.

Guerricus, a most famous divine, hearing the fifth chapter of Genesis read, wherein are recounted the sons and descendants of Adam, in these terms: "The whole life of Adam was nine hundred and thirty years, and he died; the life of his son Seth was nine hundred and twelve years, and he died;" and so of the rest; began to think with himself, that if such and so great men, after so long time, ended in death, it was not safe to lose more time in this world, but so to secure his life, that, losing it here, he might find it hereafter. What can the delights of man be, since his life is but a dream, a shadow, and as the twinkling of an eye? If the most long life be short, what can be the pleasures of that moment, by which is lost eternal happiness? O, how vain are men, who, seeing life so short, endeavour to live long, and not to live well! Since it is a thing most certain, that every man may live well; but no man, what age soever he attains unto, can live long; every day we die, and every day we lose some part of life; and in our growth, our life decreases and grows less; and this very day wherein we live we divide with death; our life, in the book of wisdom, is compared unto the passing of a shadow, which as it may be said to be a kind of night, so life may be called a kind of death; for as the shadow hath some part of light, some of darkness; so our life hath some part of death, and some of life, until it comes to end in a pure death; and since it is to end in a not being, it is very little to be regarded; especially compared with eternity, which hath a being constant and for ever. The shadow, wheresoever it passes, leaves no track behind it; and of the greatest personages in the world, when they are once dead, then there remains no more than if they had never lived. How many preceding emperors in the Assyrian monarchy were lords of the world, as well as Alexander? And now we remain not only ignorant of their monuments, but know not so much as their names: and of the same great Alexander, what have we at this day, except the vain noise of his fame! There is nothing constant in this life; the moon hath every month her changes; but the life of man hath them every day, every hour; now he is sick, now in health, now sorrowful, now merry, now fearful. With what imaginations is he afflicted! With how many labours and toils does he daily wrestle! With what thoughts and apprehensions doth he torment himself! What dangers of soul and body doth he run into! What vanity is he forced to behold! What injuries to suffer! What necessities and afflictions! Nay, such is our whole life, that it seems unto me little less evil than that of hell, but only for the hope we have of heaven; our infancy is full of ignorance and fears, our youth of sin, our age of sorrow, and our whole life of dangers. There is none content with his condition, but he who will die whilst he lives; insomuch as life cannot be good, unless it most resemble death. Since, therefore, the whole time of this life is so short, and we know not how long it will last, let us resolve not to lose the opportunity of gaining eternity. Although we were certain to live yet a hundred years longer, we ought not to spare one minute from the gaining of eternity: but being uncertain how long we are to live, and perhaps shall die to-morrow, how can we be so careless, as to let the securing of our glory pass, which hereafter will never be offered? Consider what an eternal repentance will follow thee, if thou makest not use of the occasion of time for the purchasing of the kingdom of heaven; especially when thou shalt see, that, with so little ado, thou mightest have gained that everlasting glory, which, to satisfy a short pleasure, thou hast lost for ever.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who dwellest in eternity, whose power is eternal, and whose kingdom is the kingdom of all ages! Take me by thy right hand, O Lord; conduct me to thy eternal glory: let me esteem all things as nothing, in respect of eternity. Grant, O Lord, that I may so pass through things temporal, that I do not finally lose the things eternal. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

All Things on this side Heaven are inconstant and transitory.

As time itself is in a perpetual succession and mutation, being the companion of motion, so it fixes

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this ill condition unto most of those things which pass along in it; the which not only have an end, and that a short one, but even, during the shortness of time which they last, have a thousand changes; and before their ends, many ends; and before their deaths, many deaths; each particular change, which our life suffers, being the death of some estate, or part of it. For as death is the total change of life, every change is the death of some part. Sickness is the death of health, sleeping of waking, sorrow of joy, impatience of quiet, youth of infancy, age of youth. The same condition hath the universal world, and all things in it; so that all things which follow time, and even time itself, at last must die. All human things, as well intrinsically, and of their own nature, as by external violences which they suffer, are subject to perish; the fairest flower withers of itself, yet is oftentimes before borne away by the wind, or perishes by some storm of hail. The most exact beauties lose their lustre by age, but are often before blasted by some violent fever. The strongest and most sumptuous palaces decay with continuance, if before not ruined by fire or earthquake. Cast your eyes upon those things which men judge most worthy to endure, and made them to the end they should be eternal: how many changes and deaths have they suffered!

Gregory of Nazianzen placed the city of Thebes, in Egypt, as the chiefest of those wonders which the old world admired;[a] most of the houses were of alabaster-marble, spotted with drops of gold, which made them appear most splendid and magnificent; upon the walls were many pleasant gardens, the gates no fewer than a hundred, out of which the prince could draw forth numerous armies without noise. Pomponius Mela writes, that out of every port there issued ten thousand armed men, which, in the whole, came to be an army of a million; yet all this huge multitude could not secure it from a small army conducted by a youth, who took and destroyed it.[b]

Marcus Polus writes, that he passed by the city of Quinsay, which contained fourscore millions of souls:[c] and Nicholas de Conti, passing not many years after by the same way, found the city wholly destroyed, and begun to be newly built after another form. But yet greater than this was the city of Nineveh, which was of three days' journey; and it is now many ages since, that we know not where it stood. No less stately, but perhaps better fortified, was the city of Babylon: and that which was the imperial city of the world, became a desert, a habitation of harpies, satyrs, and monsters; and the walls, which were two hundred feet in height, and fifty in breadth, could not defend it from time.

It is not much that cities have suffered so many changes, since monarchies and empires have done the same: and so often hath the world changed her face, as she hath changed her monarch and master. He who had seen the world as it was in the time of the Assyrians, would not have known it as it was in the time of the Persians; and he who knew it in the time of the Persians, would not have judged it for the same when the Greeks were masters; after, in the time of the Romans, it appeared with a face not known before; and he who knew it then, would not know it now; and some years hence it will put on another form, being in nothing more like itself than in its perpetual changes. Therefore, nothing does more deserve our scorn and contempt, and more now than ever; since it becomes every day worse, and grows old, and decays with age; neither is the world only grown worse in the natural frame of it, but is also much defaced in the moral; the manners of men have altered it more than the violences and encounters of the elements.

How many kingdoms were overthrown by the covetousness of Cyrus! The ambition of Alexander did not only destroy a great part of the world, but made it put on a clear other face than it had before. That which time spares, is often snatched away by the covetousness of the thief; and how many lives are cut off by revenge, before they arrive unto old age!

There is no stability in any thing, and least in man; who is not only changeable in himself, but changes all things besides.

One day often makes an end of great riches. Many personages of great honour and esteem, changing their fortune, become infamous. Dionysius was thrust from his throne, from a king of Sicily, to be schoolmaster in Corinth, and taught boys; who could think, that, from a king, he should be necessitated to become a schoolmaster? Who would not wonder at the cozenage of the world, that should see him in his royal palace with a sceptre in his hand, compassed about with his servants, and the great ones of his kingdom; and should after behold him in his school, managing a rod, in the midst of a number of boys? Crœsus, the most rich king of Lydia, who, being in hope to overthrow the Persians, not only lost his own kingdom, but fell into the power of his enemies, and failed a little of being burnt alive. Particular persons are not only witnesses that all human things are dreams: but cities, nations, and kingdoms; nothing remains like itself; all things present are more frail and weak than the webs of spiders, and more deceitful than dreams. From this inconstancy of human things, we may extract a constancy for ourselves; first, by despising things so transitory; secondly, by a resolute hope of an end or change in our adversity and afflictions; since nothing here below is constant, but all mutable; and as things sometimes change from good to evil, so they may also from evil unto good.

There is no confidence to be placed in human prosperity; for neither kingdom, empire, nor any greatness whatsoever, can secure their owners from ruin and misfortunes. Behold Andronicus clothed in purple, adored by nations, commanding the East, his temples enriched with a royal diadem, the imperial sceptre in his hands, and his very shoes studded with oriental gems; presently after, he is insulted over by the basest of his people, buffeted

[a] Nazian. in Monod.—PLIN. lib. xxxvi. c. 2.
[b] Pomp. Me. lib. c. 9. Evag. lib. ii. c. 1.
[c] Polus, lib. ii. rerum Indic. c. 68.

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by women, and pelted with dirt and stones in his imperial city; and lastly, they hung him up by the heels betwixt two pillars, and there left him to die. This is enough to make us contemn all temporal goods and human felicity, which not only passes away with time, but often changes into greater misfortunes. What esteem can that merit, which stands exposed to so much misery, which is by so much the more sensible to the sufferer, by how much it was less expected?

The emperor Vitellius, whom the east and west acknowledged to be the great monarch of the world, in Rome saluted with so glorious titles, that he seemed to be all he could desire less than a god; but wherein ended all his majesty, but in the greatest infelicity and misery that can be imagined? The people having violently seized upon him, tied a rope about his neck, and his hands behind him, tore his garments from his back, and struck a dagger under his chin; they haled him ignominiously up and down the streets of Rome, cast filth in his face, and reviled him with a thousand injurious speeches, and at last killed him in the market-place, and threw him down the Gemonies, where they used to fling the corpses of malefactors. Folly is all human greatness, since at last it must end, and perhaps in a disastrous and unhappy conclusion.

Who would have imagined that Valerianus the emperor, who was mounted upon his brave courser, trapped with gold, clad in purple, crowned with the imperial diadem, adored by nations, and commanding over kingdoms, should be taken prisoner by the king of Persia, be kept enclosed in a cage like some wild beast, used as a footstool for the king to get on horseback? But such contrary fortunes happen in human life, let us not therefore trust in it; crowns nor sceptres do not secure us from the inconstancy of changes; and we may better trust unto the wind, or to letters written upon water, than unto human felicity.

The changes of fortune are but exchanges of one condition for another; no man can fall when he is at lowest; and the lowest and basest of all things is human felicity, which when it quits us, we fall not, but change it, and perhaps for the better: the life of man is a lamentable tragedy, wherein we observe such contrary extremes. I know all human greatness is vanity; therefore I will never grieve for the loss of that which was nothing; that is not worthy of grief which deserves not love: things below, as they merit not my affections when I enjoy them, so they ought not to vex and afflict me when I lose them.

What are imperial diadems? what are thrones, and majesty? what are ornaments of gold and silver? All are vanity, and vanity of vanities. What were, then, the spectacles of the amphitheatre, the games of the circus, and the seignory of the world, but vanity of vanities, universal vanity? The same would Crœsus have preached from the flames; Bajazet from his cage; and Dionysius from his school. If we had the opinion of those persons which are now damned, what would they think of majesty which they enjoyed in this life? Vanity! they will say it is a smoke, a dream, a shadow. Where is now the splendour of the consulate? where the lictors and their fasces? where the crowns and tapestry? where the banquets and revels? All those things are perished; a boisterous wind hath blown away the leaves, and left the naked trees tottering, and almost plucked up by the roots. Where are the seven wonders of the world? where is Nero's golden palace? where are Diocletian's hot baths? where is Julius's colossus; or Pompey's amphitheatre? They are all gone, there is no print of them remaining. And if we consider the greatness of this world, we shall perceive, that by how much it is more glorious, by so much it is more vain. What greater majesty, than that of the Roman empire? yet scarce was the election of a Roman emperor known, before he was murdered: amongst nineteen or twenty emperors which passed betwixt Antoninus the philosopher and Claudius the Second, not one escaped a violent death; so as the greatest felicity of the world was tied to the greatest mishap: therefore Dionysius, to express the miseries and infelicities of the lives of kings, said, "It was like that of condemned persons, which every hour expect death." "O crown!" said king Antigonus, more noble than happy, "if men knew how full thou art of cares and dangers, no man would take thee up, though he should find thee in the streets." And Constantine the Great, who was arrived at the height of human felicity, said, "His life was something more honourable than that of shepherds, but much more troublesome." There is no felicity upon earth, which carries not its counterpoise of misfortunes; no happiness which mounts so high, which is not depressed by some calamity.

The felicity of this life is but a shadow of true happiness; for the shadow is not a body, but a resemblance of a body; and seeming to be something, is nothing; the inconstancy and speedy change of human things deserves this name, because the shadow is always altering, and ends on a sudden; and as the shadow, when it is at length, and can increase no further, is nearest to the end; so temporal goods, and human fortunes, when they are mounted up as high as the stars, are then nearest to vanish, and disappear suddenly. Those who work in perspective, will so paint a room, that the light entering only through some little hole, you shall perceive beautiful and perfect figures and shapes; but if you open the windows, and let in a full light, at most you shall see but some imperfect lines and shadows; so things of this world seem great and beautiful unto those who are in darkness, and have but little light in heaven; but those who enjoy the perfect light of truth and faith, find nothing in them of substance.

The things of this world are not only a shadow, but are very deceitful; they promise us goods, and give us evils; promise us ease, and give us cares; promise security, and give us danger; promise us great contents, and give us great vexations; there is no felicity upon earth, no happiness which mount so high, which is not depressed by some low calamity: it is not needful to attend the end of life to see the

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imposture of it, it is enough to see the alterations whilst it lasts; be assured, that vain is all the greatness of the earth, if that of heaven be not gained by it. Since, then, all kingdoms, empires, honours, and greatness whatsoever, are but a shadow, and will presently vanish, and we are here in this world but as in an inn, from whence we are suddenly to depart; let us take care for our journey, and furnish ourselves with provision and a viaticum for eternity; let us clothe ourselves with such garments as we may carry along with us: this may be our comfort, that our wealth, whether we will or no, may be taken from us, but eternal happiness, unless by our fault, cannot; we may be deprived of honours against our wills, but not of our virtues except we consent; temporal goods may perish, be stolen, and lost many ways, but spiritual goods can only be forsaken, and are then only lost when we leave them by our sins; the roses of glory in heaven do never fade, nor doth custom dull the lively taste of those celestial delights: let us therefore convey our riches here through the hands of the poor in bills of exchange, into the eternity of glory, where such money is current, for our good works will follow us. I will therefore preserve myself in humility, I will not confide in prosperity, nor presume upon my virtues, though never so great, since every man is subject to fall into those misfortunes he little thinks of: I will not trust in life, because it may fail, whilst the goods of it remain; and will as little trust in them, because they may likewise fail, whilst it continues.

Blessed Lord! thou art my salvation, thou art my glory, my aid, and all my hope is in thee: at thy right hand there are riches, greatness, and powers, for ever, without end.

CHAPTER III.

All Sublunary Things are contemptible, and of no Value.

THE things of this world, though their vanity, which swells and blows them up, seems to extend and engreaten them; yet they are in themselves contemptible and little; those things which seem to make the greatest noise, are honour, fame, and renown; we shall see how narrow they are; and hear one who was placed in the highest degree of glory and dignity in the whole world, since he was lord of it, the emperor Marcus Antoninus, who speaks in this manner: Perhaps thou art solicitous of honour; behold how quickly oblivion blots out all things; behold a chaos of eternity both before and after!

How vain is the noise of fame! how great the inconstancy and uncertainty of human judgments and opinions! in how narrow a compass are all things enclosed! The world is but a point: and of it, how small a corner of it is inhabited! and who, and how many, are those in it, who are to praise thee? He who desires fame and honour after death, thinks not that he who is to remember him shall shortly die also; and in the same manner he who is to succeed after him, until that all memory, which is to be propagated by mortal men, be blotted out. But suppose that those who are to remember thee, were immortal; what could it import thee being dead? nay, being alive, what could it profit thee to be praised? All that is fair, is fair of itself, and is perfected with itself; and to be praised, is no part of the beauty.

Consider the vanity of those titles, which many have assumed only to make themselves known in the world: let us judge how it will fare with us of Europe, by those who have taken titles upon them in Asia; for if the fame of those in Asia arrive not to the knowledge of us in Europe, no more shall ours in Europe to theirs in Asia.

The name of Echebar was thought by his subjects to be eternal, and that all the world did not only know, but fear him;[a] but ask here in Europe who he was, and no man hath heard of him; demand of the most learned, and few shall resolve you that he reigned in Mogor.

How few have heard of the name of Veneatapadino Ragium! He imagined that there was no man in the world who knew him not; how many can tell me that he was the king of Narsinga? If, then, these warlike and potent princes are not known in Europe, no more shall Charles the Fifth, and many other excellent men in arms and literature, which have flourished in these parts, be known in Asia and Africa.

If we reflect upon the truth of those titles, which many arrogate unto themselves, we shall perceive them all to be vain. How many are called Highness, and Excellence, who are of base and abject spirit, and continue in mortal sin, which is the meanest and lowest thing in the world! how many are called Serenissimi, who have their understanding darkened, and their will perverted! Others call themselves Most Magnificent, with as much reason as Nero might be called Most Clement. The things wherein we have placed honour, make it most ridiculous; some think they should be valued and esteemed, because they are strong; not remembering, that a bear, a bull, or a sumpter-mule, is stronger than they: some, because they are richly clad, become mighty proud, and puffed up; not being ashamed to be more esteemed for the work of a mechanic tailor, than for their virtuous actions: others think to be honoured for their dishonours, bragging of their vices: others boast of the nobility of their blood, without looking upon virtue, and so make that a vice which was to oblige them to noble actions; converting that which was to be their honour, into infamy; valuing themselves more for being noble, than being virtuous and just.

A man is no greater than what he is in the eyes of God; and the estimation which God hath of us, is not for being born in a palace, but for being righteous and just: what an error is it, then, to value ourselves more for our human birth by which

[a] Jarric. in Thesau. Indic.

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we are made sinners, than for our divine birth, by which we are made just! How foolish were he, who, being the son of a king and bond-woman, should esteem himself more for being the son of a slave, than of a monarch! More fool is he, who values more the nobility of his blood in being a gentleman, than the nobility of his soul in being a christian: all honours of the earth are but splendid vanities; and those who seek after them, are like boys who hunt after butterflies; yet many souls have perished by them. If David cursed the mountains of Gilboa, because Saul and Jonathan died upon them; with much more reason may we curse the high mountains of honour, upon which so many souls have been sure to perish.

Let us consider what riches are, unto whom Gregory Nazianzen did much honour, when he called them a precious dung; truly in themselves they are not much better: "Gold and silver," said Antoninus the philosopher, "were nothing else than excrements and dregs of the earth: what are precious stones but shining pebbles, some red, some green?" &c.; silk, but the slaverings of worms? and the finest Holland, and the purest linen, but threads of certain plants? Other webs of esteem are made of hair of beasts; whereof, if we should meet one in our meat, it would make us loathe it; and many in their clothes are proud of them: furs, what are they but the skins of contemptible vermin? civet, but the sweat of a cat near its most noisome parts? amber, but the uncleanness of a whale; or something which the sea purges from it, as not worthy to be preserved? What are possessions, palaces, cities, provinces, and spacious kingdoms. They are only toys of men, who, though old, are but children in esteeming so much of them. Lucian, beholding them not from the imperial heaven, but from the sphere of the moon, said, "All Greece possessed not above four fingers; and that Peloponnesus was not bigger than a lentil seed." To Seneca, the whole compass of the earth seemed but a point: and all the greatness thereof only matter of sport. Riches were invented for the ease and commodity of life; but as man hath made them, they serve for the greatest trouble and vexation: he who hath wealth, hath most want, because he not only needs for himself, but for all which he possesseth: so that he which hath a great house, hath the same necessities that his house hath, which are many; for a great house requires much furniture, and a large family; and so charges the master with multitudes of servants, great quantities of plate, hangings, and other ornaments superfluous to use and human commodity; insomuch as none are more poor than the rich; because they want, not only for themselves, but for all that is theirs: at least, riches want not this incommodity, that although they were invented for human use and ease, yet he that hath them in the greatest abundance, hath the greatest cares, troubles, dangers, and ever the greatest losses. Let us, therefore, while we have time, make over our riches; let us send them before us into another world; heaven stands open to receive them, we need not doubt of safe carriage; the carriers are very faithful and trusty, they are the poor and needy of this world we make over unto them here, by way of exchange a few things of little value; being to receive in heaven for them, an exceeding eternal weight of glory.

How narrow is the sphere of all our pleasures, which, besides the short time they endure, are mingled with wormwood of many pains and griefs! The adulterer, how many troubles and dangers does he usually pass, before he compass his desire! in enjoying, what fears and suspicions assault him! and when it is past, (if he thinks seriously of the sin,) what remorse and repentance afflict him! And oftentimes, how many long diseases and sharp pains succeed that, which lasted but a moment! The several sorts of gusts, whereof the touch is capable, exceed not two or three, but the distinct sorts of pains which afflict it, are without number: the greatest pleasure of the sense holds no comparison with the grief endured by the separation of a member; or the pain suffered by him who hath the stone, sciatica, or some violent disease in extremity.

What shall we say of the royal and imperial dignity, which seems, in human judgment, to embrace all the happiness of the world? Honours, riches, pleasures, all are contained in it; but how small is a kingdom, since the whole earth, in respect of the heavens, is no bigger than a point!

Look not upon the crown, but upon the tempest of cares which accompany it; fix not thy eyes upon the purple, but upon the mind of the king, more sad and dark than the purple itself; the diadem doth not more encompass his head, than cares and suspicions his soul: look not at the squadrons of his guards, but at the armies of his molestations which attend him; for nothing can be so full of cares as the palaces of kings: but it is far otherwise in heaven, the palace and house of God, where the just, without mixture or counterpoise of misery, are to enjoy those eternal.

If you look upon the so much esteemed greatness of this world; the brave palaces, renowned cities, large kingdoms; you may compare them to those little houses of sand or dirt, made by children for their entertainment; which men stand by and laugh at; and oftentimes, if their parents or masters find that it hinders them from learning of their lessons, they strike them down with their feet, and destroy that in a moment, which hath cost the boys much time and labour; so God useth to deal with those who, neglecting his service, employ themselves in scraping together riches, enlarging their possessions, building of palaces, which he destroys with that ease, as if they were those little houses of sand, made by children; and certainly, more children are they who set their hearts upon the greatness of this short life, than those who busy themselves in walls of dirt.

Esteem none for their exterior lustre and bravery; he must die as well as the most poor and unknown beggar; he must be buried, and at last appear before the just judgment; wherefore dost thou then value and admire those things which have no consistence, as if they were to last for ever?

If you look upon a table, where you behold

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painted a rich and powerful man and a poor contemptible beggar, you neither envy the one nor despise the other; because you know them to be shadows and no truths: the same judgment we ought to make of the things themselves; for all are but shadows, and little more than nothing: and as in a comedy or farce, it imports little who plays Alexander, and who the beggar, since all are equal when the play is done; so are all after death.

I will, therefore, from hence learn not to admire the grandeur of this world, nor to desire any thing in it; I have an inheritance in heaven which none can take from me; there I have a mansion, not made by the hands of men; I will look after those eternal goods, which, by my faith and hope, I do now enjoy; they can never be taken from me, for they are the eternal inheritance of the just.

CHAPTER IV.

The Vanity of Man.

If we consider the greatest thing in nature, which is man, we shall see how vain and little he is, being temporal. What is man? saith Seneca. A frail vessel, broken with the least motion; a most weak body, naked by nature, and unarmed, subject to the injuries of fortune; composed of things infirm and fluid, and those very things, without which man cannot live, as smell, taste, meat, and drink, are mortal unto him. The wise Solon did not answer more favourably, when they demanded of him, What was man? "He is," saith he, "a corruption in his birth, a beast in his life, and food for worms when he is dead." He does things evil, which are not lawful; things filthy, which are not decent; things vain, which are not expedient. Behold the plants and trees; they produce flowers, haws, and fruit; man, nothing but vermin and worms: they furnish us with oil, wine, and balsam; man affords nothing but phlegm and ordure: those send forth a fragrant odour, and man abominable stink: and such is man even in his youth and best time: but if he reach old age, which is esteemed as a felicity, his heart is afflicted, his head shakes, his spirits languish, his breath smells, his face wrinkles, his stature bends, his eyes wax dim, his hands tremble, his hair falls, his ears grow deaf; neither is he more changed in body than in mind: an old man is easily displeased, hardly pacified, believes quickly, covetous, froward, still complaining, admires what is past, contemns what is present, sighs, grieves, languishes, and is always infirm.

Consider, also, wherein man ends: what thing more noisome than a human carcass? what more horrible than a dead man? he whose embraces were most acceptable when he was alive, even his sight is troublesome when he is dead. What do riches and honour profit him? they shall not free him from death, they shall not defend him from the worms, they shall not take away his stink and ill savour. He, who even now was seated in a glorious throne, is now flung into an obscure tomb; he, who lately feasted in a sumptuous sata, is now feasted upon by worms in a dark sepulchre. Wherefore dost thou wax proud, dust and ashes, whose conception was in sin, whose birth in misery, whose life in pain, and whose death necessity? Wherefore dost thou swell, and adorn thy flesh with precious things, which, in a few days, is to be devoured by worms; and dost not rather adorn thy soul with good works, which is to be presented in heaven before God and his angels?

Besides that man is a thing so poor and mean, and composed of so base and vile materials; this vileness and meanness hath no firmness nor consistence, but is a river of changes, a perpetual corruption, and a fantasm of time; his nature, from his birth until his death, is unstable, mutable, and transitory; the more you consider it, the more it flies from you. The embryon, which is framed from seed, quickly becomes an infant; from thence a boy, from thence a young man, from thence an old, and then decrepit; and so the first age being past and corrupted by new ones which succeed, it comes at last to die: how ridiculous then are men to fear one death, who have already died so many, and are yet to die more! He never remains the same, but in every moment he changes, as it were, with various fantasms in one common matter; if he be still the same, how comes he to delight in things he did not before? He now loves and abhors after another manner than formerly; he now praises and dispraises other things than he did before, he uses other words, and is moved with other affections; he doth not hold the same form, nor pass the same judgment he did; and how is it possible, that without change in himself, he should thus change in his motions and affections? Certainly, he who still changes, is not the same; and he who is not the same, cannot be said to be, but, in a continual mutation, slides away like water: where shall we then find true being, but in that only which is eternal, and knows no beginning; which is incorruptible, which is not changed with time?

Man is not only thus vile and base whilst he lives, and much more being dead; but even his soul, whilst it remains in his body, is not of much greater esteem: for although the soul be of itself of a most noble substance, yet his vices do so much vilify it, that he makes it more abominable than the body; and, without doubt, the soul, when it is dead in mortal sin, is more corrupt and stinking in the sight of the angels, than a body dead eight days ago; for if that body be full of worms, this is full of sins and vices; and if a man knew himself well, he would be more affrighted at the misery of his soul, than at that of his flesh.

Amongst all evils, man is the most evil; every beast hath an evil which is peculiar unto it, but man is all evils; the devil dares not approach a just man, but man dares despise him. Man is compared to the beasts of the field: it is worse to be compared to a beast, than to be one; for it is no

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fault to be born an unreasonable creature; but to be endowed with reason, and to be compared to a beast, is a fault of the will, so as this untamed passion makes him worse than beasts.

What sorts of deaths and torments hath not human cruelty found out? what sorts of poison hath not the passion of man invented? Orpheus, Orus, Medisius, Hesiodotus, and other authors, have found out five hundred several ways of giving poison covertly, which have since been, to the calamity of man, wonderfully increased: nothing is now secure from the malice of man, since poison hath been given even in the shaking of hands, when men were to be reconciled and made friends: only in the sense of hearing, it hath not yet found a door to enter; all the rest of the senses it hath mastered: with the smell of a rose, with the sight of a letter, with the touch of a thread, with the taste of a grape, death hath found an entrance.

And as though man were not miserable enough by nature, his very passions must contribute to make him wretched and unhappy: the proud man grieves and consumes for the felicity of another; the envious dies to see a happy man live; the covetous man loses his sleep for what he hath no need of; the choleric man ruins himself for what no ways concerns him: with reason did the prophet say, "In vain doth man trouble himself; he troubles himself, and before he attains rest, is overwhelmed; he mounts on high like a tempest; and like dust is scattered and disappears; he is kindled like a flame, and vanishes like smoke; he spreads himself as a cloud, and is contracted as a drop." He is troubled to gain the filth of riches, and a little dirt; his are the troubles, others' the joys; his are the cares, others' the contents; his are the curses, others' the respect and reverence. The life of man is full of vain labours, of vexatious thoughts, thinking how to obtain what he desires, and then how to keep it; after how to increase it, then how to defend it, and lastly how to enjoy it; and yet, in conclusion, all falls to pieces in the handling, and becomes nothing. What labour doth it cost the poor spider to weave his web, passing incessantly from one part to another; and often returning to the same place where he began, consuming himself with the threads drawn from his proper entrails, for the forming of his pavilion; which, with many journeys, having placed on high, and at last finished this goodly artifice, one touch of a broom defaces and brings to ground all his labour! Just such are the employments of man, of much toil, and of little profit; spending the most part of his time in useless projects, which, of themselves, fall to nothing, and, in the end, vanish without effect.

In vain doth man trouble himself, for he enjoys a life but lent him, and that but for a short time; man is but a debt of death, which is to be paid without delay. I have considered with tears what man was made of, what he is, and what he shall be. He was made of earth, and conceived in sin, and born for punishment: O unhappy condition of human nature! O the vanity and delusions of man! Thou which gloriest in the strength of body, thou which embracest the gifts of fortune, and thinkest not thyself her servant, but her darling; see how thou mightest have perished, even before thou wert, with so little a thing as a snuff of a candle; and mayest yet with a smaller matter, pricked with the little tooth of an adder; or, like Anacreon, the poet, choked with the stone of a grape; or, like Fabius, the Roman senator, suffocated with a hair in a draught of milk. The life of man, compared to the continuance of the world, is but a moment; and the world's continuance is but a moment in respect of eternity.

With good reason then is the life of man to be valued as nothing; since nothing is more frail, nothing more perishing; and, in conclusion, is little more than if it had no being at all. Glass, without violence, may last long; but the life of man ends of itself: glass may, with care, be preserved for many ages; but nothing can preserve the life of man.

All this king David well understood, who was the most powerful and happy prince the Hebrews ever had; yet, when he considered that his greatness was to have an end, valued it as nothing; and not only esteemed his kingdoms and treasures as vanity, but even his life itself: wherefore he says, "Thou hast put, Lord, a measure unto my days, and my substance is as nothing."[a] All my kingdoms, all my trophies, all my treasures, all which I possess, all is nothing: and presently adds, "doubtless all is vanity;" all which living man is, all his whole life is vanity, and nothing that belongs to him so frail as himself.

O if we could but frame a true conception of the shortness of this life, how should we despise the pleasures of it! This is a matter of such importance, that God commanded the principal of his prophets, that he should go into the streets and market-places, and proclaim aloud, that "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flowers of the field;" for as the grass, which is cut in the morning, withers before night, and as the flower is quickly faded, so is the life of all flesh, the beauty and splendour of it withering in a day: he who shall look upon the frailty of our flesh, and that every moment of an hour we increase and decrease without ever remaining in the same state; and even what we now speak, dictate, or write, flies away with some part of our life, will not doubt to say, "his flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower of the field:" he that was yesterday an infant, is now a boy, and will suddenly be a youth, and even until old age runs changing through uncertain conditions of life, and perceives himself first to be an old man, before he begins to admire that he is not still a boy; nay, seeing death seizeth upon others, yet he will not believe that it shall happen to him; and although he hear of it hourly, yet it appears unto him as a hidden mystery, which he cannot understand. God, therefore, commanded his prophet Isaiah, that he should proclaim it with a loud voice, as a thing of great importance, and that it might sink into the heart of man: receive, therefore, this truth from God himself, "All flesh is grass," all age is short,

[a] Psal. xxxvii.

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all time flies, all life vanishes; and a great multitude of years are but a great nothing.

Let us hear how true this is, from those who lived the longest, and have had the experience of what it is to live; perhaps thou mayest promise thyself to live a hundred years, as though this were a long life: hearken then unto holy Job, who lived two hundred and forty years, who knew best what it was to live; what says he of all his years? "My days," saith he, "are nothing;" nothing, he calls them, although they lasted almost three ages. In other places, he says the life of man is like the flower, which springs up to-day, and to-morrow is trodden under foot; and that it flies like a shadow, without ever remaining in the same state: how poor a thing then is life, since holy Job calls it but a shadow, though then three or four times longer than at present! Those who lived more than eight hundred years, esteemed their life but as a shadow; and in the instant when they died, judged they were scarce born. How can we think to live long in a time, wherein it is much to make the age of sixty years! A life then of eight hundred years being no more than the flirting up and down of a little sparrow, the flight of an arrow, or to say better, the passage of a shadow: what then are fifty years, unto which, perhaps, thou mayest attain? certainly the longest term whereunto human life extends, was compared by Homer, but unto the leaves of the tree, which, at most, endure but a summer's season. Euripides judged that too much, and said, that human felicity was to be valued but at the length of a day: and Demetrius Phalereus allowed it but a moment's space. Consider, then, how vile are all things temporal, and how frail is all the glory of the world, being grounded upon so feeble a foundation: the goods of the earth can be no greater than is life, which give them their value; and if that be so poor and short, what shall they be? what good can be of value, which is sustained by a life so contemptible and full of misery? A figure of this was the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, which although made of rich metal, as of gold and silver, yet was founded on feet of clay; so as a little stone falling upon it, overthrew it unto the earth. All the greatness and riches of the world have, for foundation, the life of him who enjoys them, which is so frail and slippery, that not a little stone, but even the grain of a grape hath been able to ruin and overthrow it.

I shall not, therefore, be ambitious of a rich mausoleum after my death, for the repose of my body; nor do I desire a stately sepulchre, a beautiful urn, or that my name or actions should be engraven in marble: I know this, that if I shall be miserable and unhappy hereafter, they will be but for my greater shame and reproach. Out of this life I can carry nothing but my good works; I will not add unto my evil ones that of vain glory; I will take heed whereon I set my heart, since the accomplishing of what I wish may be a punishment of my desires; if those things of the earth which I most love and desire should continue, if they be taken from me it is a chastisement of my earthly affection; and if I be permitted to enjoy them, I am fearful that they may be the temporal reward of some good work, which may either diminish or deprive me of the eternal.

CHAPTER V.

The Miseries of Temporal Life.

IF man, before he was born, knew what he was to suffer in his life, he would not be born at all; therefore Silenus, being demanded what was the greatest happiness man was capable of, said, "Not to be born, or die quickly." With reason did Democritus say, That the life of man was most miserable, since those who seek for good, hardly find it, and evil comes of itself, and enters our gates unsought for: insomuch as our life is always exposed unto innumerable dangers, injuries, losses, and to so many infirmities, that, according to Pliny and many physicians, Greeks and Arabians, there were more than thirty several sorts of new diseases discovered in the space of few years; and now every day finds out others, and some so cruel, that they are not to be named without horror; and the malice of the disease is not greater than many times the remedies strange. Some have been cured by cauterizing with fire, by sawing off a member, by trepanizing the scull, or drawing bones from it; others have been cured with the opening of the belly, and drawing forth the guts. Above all, the cure of Palæologus II. emperor of Constantinople, was most cruel, whose infirmity, after a year's continuance, found no other remedy but to be continually vexed and displeased; his wife and servants, who most desired his health, having no ways to restore it, but by disobedience, still crossing and opposing him in what he most desired: a harsh cure for a prince! If remedies be so great evils, what are the infirmities? The sickness of Mæcenas was so strange, that he slept not, nor closed his eyes, in three whole years. That of king Antiochus was so pestilential, that his loathsome smell infected his whole army, and his body flowed with lice and vermin. Consider here the end of majesty, when the greatest power of earth cannot defend itself against so noisome and contemptible an enemy. In the same manner Feretrina, queen of the Barcæans, all the flesh of her body turned into maggots and grubs, which, swarming every where, at last consumed her. Some have had serpents bred in their arms and thighs, which have devoured their flesh even whilst they lived. With reason, then, does man enter into the world with tears, as divining the many miseries which he shall have time enough to suffer, but not to lament; and, therefore, begins to weep so early. All the days of man are full of grief and misery.

What shall I say of those strange pestilential distempers, which have destroyed whole cities and provinces? In many places it hath raged with such fury, as if it meant to extirpate all mankind; so

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many thousands of people having died, that whole towns and countries have remained desert. The evil hath been many times so great, that fathers forsook their children, and women their husbands; riches did not preserve them from dying of hunger; if they found by chance what to eat, the fury of the distemper was such, as they often died with the morsel in their mouths. To all this is human life subject. Let those, therefore, who are in health and jollity, fear what may befall them.

Famine is no less a misery of man's life, than pestilence, which not only particular persons, but whole provinces, have often suffered; many times people when they had nothing left them to eat, have fed on horses, dogs, cats, rats, dormice, and other vermin, when they could lay hold on them; and when those failed, ate one another; nay, fathers spared not their sons, nor women those whom they brought forth; and many would willingly have pawned their bowels, to have had wherewith to feed them. , What a horrid prospect is it, to see a company of people appearing in the streets more like unto ghosts and phantoms than living men! others stretched upon the ground half dead, and ready to draw the last gasp! What pity is it to behold thousands of women, feeble, pale, and hunger-starved, charged with a great number of their poor languishing infants, which, dried up with hunger, could not so much as weep, or demand succour from their sorrowful and afflicted mothers; who could only help them with their compassionate looks, of which rivers of tears, which ran from their eyes, were a sufficient witness! This a lamentable scene of a most miserable tragedy! All those miseries which fall not under imagination are found in the life of man.

Greater than all these calamities is that of war, which, of the three scourges of God, wherewith he uses to chastise kingdoms, is the most terrible; as well because it is commonly followed by the other two, as for that it brings along with it greater punishments; and which is worse, greater sins, whereof plagues are free, in which all endeavour to be reconciled with God; and even those who are in health dispose themselves for death. Famine also, though it brings with it some sins, yet it lessens others; though it be accompanied with many thefts, yet it suits not so much with pride and vanity; neither doth it permit so many sorts of vices as are occasioned by war.

Above all, the greatest calamities of man's life are not pestilence, famine, or war, but human passions not subordinate to reason. What did David suffer from the envy of Saul? exile, hunger, dangers, and war. Naboth sooner lost his life by the covetousness of Ahab, than he could have done by a plague. Elias was more afflicted with the desire of revenge in Jezebel, than if he had had the pestilence; for that made him weary of his life, and this would but have made him weary of his disease. What plagues or wars were like the ambition of Herod, which destroyed so many thousand children? What contagion was more mortal than the cruelty of Nero and other tyrants, who took away the lives of so many innocent people, to satisfy their fears or fancies?

Who is so happy to content all, and be envied of none? Who is so esteemed that some do not despise him? Who is so general a well-doer, that nobody complains of him? The Athenians found fault with their Simonides, because he talked too loud. The Thebans accused Panniculus, that he spit too much. The Carthaginians spake ill of Hannibal, because he went open-breasted, with his stomach bare. Others laughed at Julius Cæsar, because he was ill-girt. There is none so upright, in whom envy will not find something to reprehend.

So many are the miseries of life, that they cannot all be numbered. Death, which is thought by some the greatest of evils, is by many esteemed a lesser evil than life; the many evils in this, surpassing the greatness of the evil in that: and, therefore, some have conceived it is better to suffer the greatest, which is death, than to suffer so many, though lesser, which are in life: for this reason, one calls death the last and greatest physician, because, though in itself it be the greatest evil, yet it cures all others; and, therefore, prescribes the hopes of it, as an efficacious remedy and comfort in the afflictions of life.

What security can there be in life, when the earth, which is the mother of the living, is unfaithful to them, and sprouts out miseries and deaths, even of whole cities? What can be secure in the world, if the world itself be not, and the most solid parts of it shake? If that which is only immovable and fixed for to sustain the living, tremble with earthquakes; if what is proper to the earth, which is to be firm, be unstable and betray us; where shall our fears find a refuge? When the roof of the house shakes, we may fly into the fields; but when the earth shakes, whither shall we go?

In the time of the plague we may change places; but from the whole earth who can fly? and so from dangers: and therefore not to have a remedy, may secure us as a comfort in our evils; for fear is foolish without hope. Reason banishes fear in those who are wise, and in those who are not. Despair of remedy gives a kind of security, at least takes away fear. He that will fear nothing, let him think all things are to be feared. See what slight things endanger us; even those which sustain life lay ambushes for us. Meat and drink, without which we cannot live, take away our lives. It is not wisdom, therefore, to fear swallowing by an earthquake, and not to fear the falling of a tile. In death, all sorts of dyings are equal. What imports it, whether one single stone kills thee, or a whole mountain oppress thee? Death consists in the soul's leaving of the body, which often happens by slight accidents.

Wonderful are the ways by which death finds us out, and most poor and contemptible those things, upon which life depends; it hangs not upon a thread, but sometimes upon so small a thing as a hair. No door is shut to death; it enters where the air cannot enter, and encounters us in the very action of life. Small things are able to deprive us

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of so great a good! A little grain of a grape took away the life of Anacreon. The affections of the soul, and the pleasures of the body, become the high way unto death. Homer died of grief, and Sophocles of an excess of joy; Dionysius was killed with the good news of a victory, which he had obtained; Aurelianus died dancing; Cornelius Gallus, and Titus Etherius, died in the act of lust.

Let no man assure himself of that life which hath so many entrances for death. Let no man say, "I shall not die to-day;" for many have thought so, and yet suddenly died that very hour. By so inconsiderable things, as we have said, have many died; and thou mayest die without any of them; for sudden death, there is no need of a hair, or excess of grief, or sudden joy to surprise thee: it may happen without any of those exterior causes. A corrupt humour in the entrails, which flies unto the heart without any body's perceiving it, is sufficient to make an end of thee; and it is to be admired that no more die suddenly, considering the disorders of our life, and the frailties of our bodies. We are not of iron or brass, but of soft and delicate flesh. A clock, though of hard metal, in time wears out, and every hour needs mending; and breaking of one wheel stops the motions of all the rest. There is more artifice in a human body than in a clock, and it is much more delicate; the nerves are not of steel, nor the veins of brass, nor the entrails of iron. How many have had their livers or spleens corrupted or displaced, and have died suddenly! No man sees what he hath within his body; and such may his infirmity be, although he thinks and feels himself well, yet he may die within an hour. Let us all tremble at what may happen!

But christians, in all the miseries and dangers of human life, have great comforts to lay hold on; which are, a good conscience, hope of glory, conformity unto the Divine will, and the imitation and example of Jesus Christ. From these four he shall in life have happiness, in death security, in both comfort, and in eternity a reward.

We may draw from what hath been said, how unjust was the complaint of Theophrastus, that nature hath given a longer life unto many birds and beasts, than unto man. If our life were less troublesome, he had some reason; but it being so fraught with miseries, he might rather think that life the happiest which was shortest; wherefore it is better to die young and die well, than to die old and die ill. This voyage being of necessity, the felicity of it consists not in being long, but being prosperous; and that, at the last, we arrive in the desired port. Therefore, supposing so many miseries, we cannot complain of God for having given us a short life, but of ourselves for having made it a bad one; our life being compassed with so many miseries, as that death seems rather a shelter for evils, than a punishment. God was pleased that it should be short, that the vexations and misfortunes of it, which cannot be counterpoised with any joys of the earth, might be more supportable. At least, if this life, with so many miseries, do not displease us; yet let the eternal, with all its felicities, content us better; and let us not endeavour less for the immortal life in heaven, than we do for this mortal on earth. Let us keep always in mind the years of eternity; so whatsoever adversity or affliction happen, we shall more easily bear it. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."[a]

Therefore, if the world frown upon me; if I meet with many troubles and afflictions; if misfortunes befall me; if they rush upon me like waves, one on the neck of another; if I be tossed up and down; then these shall be my daily thoughts: Well, let the world have its course, I am content to bear it; God's will be done: let the sea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the winds of affliction blow, let the waters of sorrow rush upon me, let the darkness of grief and heaviness compass me about, yet will I not be afraid: these storms will blow over, these winds will be laid, these waves will fall, this tempest cannot last long, and these clouds shall be dispelled. Whatsoever I suffer here, shall shortly have an end; I shall not suffer eternally; come the worst that can come, death will put an end to all my sorrows and miseries; "Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, et postea indulgentiam; Lord, grant me patience here, and ease hereafter." I will suffer patiently whatsoever can happen, and shall endeavour to do nothing against my conscience, and displeasing unto thee; for all is safe and sure with him, who is certain and sure of blessed eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

The End of Temporal Life.

IF the end of life should fall under our election, and that it were in the power of man to make choice how many years he would continue in life, and after what manner he would have it, and that it might conclude some other way than by death; yet the consideration that it, and all things temporal, were to perish, and at last to have an end, were sufficient to make us despise it; and that very thought would drown all the pleasures and contents which it could afford us: for as all things are of greater and lesser esteem, according to the length and shortness of their duration; so life, being to end, be it in what manner soever, is much to be disvalued. A fair vessel of crystal, if it were as consistent and durable as gold, were more precious than gold itself; but being frail, and subject to break, it loses its estimation; and although of itself it might last long, yet being capable, by some careless mischance, of being broken, it becomes of much less value. In the same manner, our life, which is much more frail than glass, being subject to perish by a thousand accidents; and though none of them should happen, could not long continue, since it consumes itself; it must needs, together with those temporal goods which attend it, be most contemptible: but, con-

[a] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

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sidering that the ending of it is by the way of death, infirmities, and misfortunes, which are the harbingers, and prepare the way for death; it is to be admired, that man, who knows he is to die, makes an account of temporal felicity, seeing the misery in which the prosperity of this world, and the majesty of the greatest monarchies, are at last to finish.

Let us consider king Antiochus, lord of so many provinces, in all his pomp and glory, glittering in gold, and dazzling the eyes of the beholders with the splendour of his diamonds and precious jewels; mounted upon a stately courser, commanding over numerous armies, and making the very earth tremble under him. Let us then behold him in his bed, pale and wan, his strength and spirits spent, his loathsome body flowing with worms and corruption; forsaken by his own people, by reason of his poisonous stink, which infected his whole camp; and, finally, dying mad, and in rage. Who, seeing such a death, would wish the felicity of his life? Who, with the condition of his misery would desire his fortune? See, then, wherein the goods of this life conclude.

Who could have known Cæsar, who had first seen him triumph over the conquered world, and then behold him gasping for a little breath, and weltering in his own blood, which flowed from twenty-three wounds, opened by so many stabs.

Who could believe it was the same Cyrus; he who subdued the Medes, conquered the Assyrians, and Chaldean empire; he who amazed the world with thirty years' success of continued victories, now taken prisoner, and put to an ignominious death by the command of a woman?

Who could think it were the same Alexander, who in so short a time subjugated the Persians, Indians, and the best part of the known world; and should after behold him conquered by a calenture, feeble, exhausted in body, dejected in spirit, dried up, and parched with thirst, without taste in his mouth, or content in his life; his eyes sunk, his nose sharp, his tongue cleaving to his palate, not being able to pronounce one word? What amazement is it, that the heat of a poor fever should consume the mightiest power and fortune of the world; and that the greatest of temporal and human prosperities should be drowned by the overflowing of one irregular and inordinate humour! How great a monster is human life, since it consists of so disproportionable parts; the uncertain felicity of our whole life ending in a most certain misery!

Who would marry a woman, though of a comely and well-proportionate body, who had the head of an ugly dragon? Certainly, although she had a great dowry, none would covet such a bed-fellow. Wherefore do we wed ourselves unto this life, which, although it seems to carry along with it much content and happiness, yet is it in effect no less a monster; since, though the body appear unto us beautiful and pleasant, yet the end of it is horrible and full of misery.

Let no man flatter himself with the vigour of his health, with the abundance of his riches, with the splendour of his authority, with the greatness of his fortune: for by how much he is more fortunate, by so much shall he be more miserable, since his whole life is to end in misery.

Let no man be deceived in beholding the prosperity of a rich man; let him not measure his felicity by what he sees at present, but by the end, wherein he shall conclude; not by the sumptuousness of his palaces, nor by the multitude of his servants, nor by the bravery of his apparel, nor by the lustre of his dignity: but let him expect the end of that which he so much admires; and he shall then perceive him at best to die in his bed, dejected, dismayed, and struggling with the pangs and anxieties of death. If he comes so off, it is well; otherwise the daggers of his enemy, the teeth of some wild beast, or a tile thrown upon his head by some violent wind, may serve to make an end of him, when he least thinks of it. O how great a madness is it to glory in any thing on this side heaven! The estate of the most powerful is subject to most impetuous storms, whose end is to be sunk and overthrown. O how wavering and uncertain is the height of the greatest honour! False is the hope of man, and vain is all his glory! O uncertain life, due unto perpetual toil and labour! What doth it now profit thee, to have raised so many costly palaces of marble, when thou now must die? O how many things dost thou now think of doing, not knowing the bitterness of their end? Thou beholdest thy friend now dying; and know, that thou also shalt quickly follow him.

Let us forbear to look upon those several kinds of death which are incident to human nature; let us consider that which is esteemed the most happy; when we die not suddenly, or by violence, but by some infirmity, which leisurely makes an end of us; or by a pure resolution, which naturally brings death along with it. What greater misery of man's life than this, that death should be accounted happy; not that it is so, but because it is less miserable than others? For what grief and sorrow doth not he pass, who dies in this manner! How do the accidents of his infirmities afflict him! The heat of his fever, which scorches his entrails; the thirst of his mouth, which suffers him not to speak; the pain of his head, which hinders his attention; the sadness of his heart, proceeding from the apprehension that he is to die; besides other grievous accidents, which are usually more in number than a human body hath members to suffer; together with remedies, which are no less painful than the evils themselves. To this, add the uncertainty whither he is to go; to heaven or hell. What news can be more terrible unto a sinner, than that he is to die; to leave all his pleasure in death, and to give an account unto God for his life past? If lots were to be cast, whether one should have his flesh plucked off with burning pincers, or be made a king; with what fear and anxiety of mind would that man expect the issue! How then shall he look, who, in the agony of death, wrestles with eternity, and, within two hours' space, looks for glory or torments without end? What life can be counted happy, if

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that be happy which ends with so much misery? If we will not believe this, let us ask him, who is now passing the terrors of death, what his opinion of life is; let us now inquire of him, when he lies with his breast sticking forth, his eyes sunk, his feet dead, his knees cold, his visage pale, his pulses without motion. What will this man say his life was, but by how much more prosperous, by so much more vain; and that all his felicity was false and deceitful, since it came to conclude in such a period? What would he now take for all the honours of this world? Certainly, I believe, he would part with them at an easy rate; nay, if they have been offensive to God Almighty, he would give all in his power he never had enjoyed them.

He who, unto the hour of his death, hath enjoyed all the delights the world can give him, at that hour what remains with him? Nothing; or if any thing, a greater grief. Consider of how little substance all temporal things will appear, when thou shalt be in the light eternal. The honours which they have given thee, shall be no more thine: the pleasures, wherein thou hast delighted, can be no more thine; thy riches are to be another's. See, then, whether the happiness of this life, which is not so long as life itself, be of that value, that for it we should part with eternal felicity.

I beseech thee, ponder what is life, and what is death. Life is the passing of a shadow, short, troublesome, and dangerous; a place which God hath given us in time, for the desiring of eternity.

Consider why God leads us about in the circuit of this life, when he might, at the first instance, have placed us in heaven. Was it that we should spend our time idly, and daily invent new chimeras, of vain and frivolous honours? No, certainly, it was not; but that, by virtuous actions, we might gain heaven, show what we owe unto our Creator, and, in the midst of the troubles and afflictions of this life, discover how loyal and faithful we are unto our God. For this he placed us in the lists, that we should take his part, and defend his honour; for this he entered us into this militia and warfare, (for the life of man is a warfare upon earth,) that here we might fight for him, and, in the midst of his and our enemies, show how true and faithful we are to him. Were it fit that a soldier, in the time of battle, should stand disarmed, passing away his time at dice upon a drum-head? This doth he who seeks his ease in this life, and sets his affections upon things of the earth; not endeavouring those of heaven, nor thinking upon death, where he is to end.

A peregrination is this life; and what passenger is so besotted with the pleasures of the way, that he forgets the place whither he is to go? How camest thou, then, to forget death, whither thou travellest with speed; and canst not, though thou desirest, rest one small minute by the way? For time, although against thy will, will draw thee along with it. The way of this life is not voluntary, like that of travellers; but necessary, like that of condemned persons, from the prison unto the place of execution. To death thou standest condemned, whither thou art now going; how canst thou laugh?

A malefactor, after sentence past, is so surprised with the apprehension of death, that he thinks of nothing but dying. We are all condemned to die; how come we, then, to rejoice in these things, which we are to leave so suddenly?

Death is compared unto a thief, who not only robs us of our treasure and substance, but bereaves us of our lives. Since, therefore, thou art to leave all, why dost thou load thyself in vain? What merchant, knowing that so soon as he arrived unto the port, his ship and goods should be sunk, would charge his vessel with much merchandise? Arriving at death, thou, and all thou hast, are to sink and perish; why dost thou, then, burden thyself with that which is not needful, but rather a hinderance to thy salvation?

This is the salary which the goods of the earth bestow on those who serve them; that if they do not leave or ruin them before their death, they are then certain at least to leave them, and often hazard the salvation of those that dote upon them. O vain man! this short life is bestowed upon thee for gaining the goods of heaven, which are to last eternally; and you spend it in seeking those of the earth, which are to perish instantly.

Besides all this, though one should die the most happy death that can be imagined, yet behold the dead body; how ugly and noisome doth the miserable carcass remain, that even friends fly from it, and scarce dare stay one night alone with it: the nearest and most obliged kindred procure it in all haste to be carried forth a-doors; and, having wrapped it in some coarse sheet, throw it into the grave, and within two days forget it. And he, who in life could not be contained in great and sumptuous palaces, is now content with the narrow lodging of seven foot of earth; he, who used to lodge in rich and dainty beds, hath for his couch the hard ground; for his mattress, moths; and for his covering, worms; his pillows, at best the bones of other dead persons; then heaping upon him a little earth, and perhaps a grave-stone, they leave his flesh to be feasted upon by worms, whilst his heirs triumph in his riches.

He who gloried in the exercise of arms, and was used to revel at balls, is now stiff and cold, his hands and feet without motion, and all his senses without life; he who with his power and pride trampled upon all, is now trod under foot by all: consider him eight days dead, drawn from his grave, how ghastly and horrible a spectacle he will appear! Behold then what thou pamperest, a body, which, perhaps within four days, may be eaten by loathsome vermin: whereon dost thou found thy vain pretensions, which are but castles in the air, founded upon a little earth, which turning into dust, the whole fabric falls to the ground. See where all human greatness concludes; and that the end of man is no less loathsome and miserable than his beginning!

The memory of the loathsomeness of a dead body may serve to make us to despise the beauty of that which is living; therefore, if, at any time, thou shalt be surprised with the temptation of the frail beauty of the flesh, send thy thoughts presently

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unto the sepulchre of the dead, and let them there see what they can find agreeable to the touch, or pleasing to the sight. Consider that dust and dry ashes were once soft and lively flesh, and in its youth was subject to the like passions as thou art. Consider those rigid nerves, those naked teeth, the disjointed disposition of the bones and arteries, and that horrible dissipation of the whole body; by this means thou mayest take from thy heart those vain deceits and illusions.

All this is certainly to happen unto thyself; wherefore dost thou not amend thy civil conditions? This is to be thy end; unto this, therefore, direct thy life and actions. With reason had the Brahmins their sepulchres still placed open before their doors, that, by the memory of death, they might learn to live. Wisdom is the meditation of death; therefore ever have in thy thoughts that meditation, "Remember, thou art to die."

Therefore, whatsoever misery or affliction shall fall upon thee, say, "By the Divine assistance, I will bear it patiently; Lord Jesu, stand by me, and comfort me: Lord Jesu, be present with thy servant, that putteth his trust in thee; receive my spirit, and lead me through the valley and shadow of death; lead me, and forsake me not, until thou hast brought my soul into the land of the living, O thou which art my light, life, and salvation!"

CHAPTER VII.

Of Death, and the Certainty of it.

BESIDES the misery wherein all the felicity of this world is to determine, there are other considerations of the end of our life to be considered; by which we may perceive, how vain and contemptible are all the goods of it. We will principally speak of three.

1. That death is most certain, and no ways to be avoided.

2. That the time is most uncertain; because we know neither when or how it will happen.

3. That it is but only one, and but once to be experienced; so that we cannot, by a second death, correct the errors of the first.

Concerning the certainty of death, it imports us much to persuade ourselves of it; for, as it is infallible that the other life shall be without end, so it is as certain that this shall have it. God hath not made a law more inviolable than that of death; thou art to die, assure thyself of that; an irrevocable law is this; and, without remedy, thou must die. I pray, tell me, where is Adam now? where is Cain? where is long-lived Methuselah? where is Noah? where is Shem? where is Abraham? where is Jacob? They are dead and gone, their time is past; we may say of them, "Vixerunt, fuerunt Tröes;" once they were, now they are not: and be assured, that "mortuus est" shall be every man's epitaph; for "we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground."[a]

The time will come, when those eyes, with which thou readest this, shall be burst, and lose their sight; those hands which thou now employest, be without sense or motion; this mouth, which now discourses, shall be mute, without breath or spirit; and this flesh, which thou now pamperest, shall be consumed and eaten by worms and vermin: the time will come, when thou shalt be covered with earth, thy body stink and rot; the time will come, when thou shalt be forgotten as if thou never hadst been, and those that pass, shall walk over thee, without remembering that such a man was born. Consider this, and persuade thyself, that thou must die as well as others; that which hath happened to so many, must happen also to thee; think upon this seriously, and reflect with thyself soberly, how thou shalt look when thou art dead; and this consideration will give thee a great knowledge what thy life is, and make thee despise the pleasures of it.

If death were only contingent, and not certain, yet because it might happen, it ought to make us very careful and solicitous. If God should say, that only one of all those in the world should die, but did not declare who that one were, yet all would fear: why, then, dost thou not now fear, when all men must infallibly die, and perhaps thou the first?

Now is the bow drawn; now the arrow let loose, and already in the way to hit thee; why dost thou strive to shun it, and dost not rather humble and prepare thyself to receive it? If one should tell thee, that a whole tire of artillery were immediately to be discharged at thee, and no way left to avoid the strokes; how wouldst thou be amazed! but if thou perceivedst that fire were already given, the very noise perhaps would kill thee; know then, that the artillery of death with much more fury is already shot, and there is no quarter of an hour, wherein it flies not more than ten millions of leagues to overtake thee, and yet from whence it parted, and where it now is, thou knowest not; wert thou certain it were far off, yet it runs with so precipitate a course, that it will not fail in a short time to reach thee. Therefore, thou being ignorant at what distance it is, thou oughtest every moment to expect it, since every moment it may be with thee.

Let every man therefore say within himself: It is I who am to die, and resolve into dust; I have nothing to do with this world; the other was made for me, and I am only to care for that; in this I am only a passenger, and am therefore to look upon the eternal, whither I am going, and am there to make my abode for ever; certain it is, that death will come and hurry me along with him; all the business therefore I have now, is to dispose myself for so hard an encounter; and since it is not in the power of man to free me from it, I will only serve the Lord, who is able to save me in so certain and imminent a danger.

2. As it is most certain that we are to die, so it is most uncertain when or in what manner we shall die: who knows whether he is to die in his old age,

[a] 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

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or in his youth; if by sickness, or struck by a thunderbolt; if a year hence, or to-day? The doors of death are ever open; and the enemy continually lies in ambush, and, when we least think of him, will assault us.

He who suspected that thieves were to enter his house, would wake all night, because they should find him at no hour unprovided; it being, then, not a suspicion, but an apparent certainty, that death will come, and we know not when, why do we not always watch? We are in a continual danger, and therefore ought to be continually prepared; it is good ever to have our accounts made with God, since we know not but he may call us in such haste as we shall have no time to perfect them; it is good to play a sure game, and be ever in the grace of God.

Who would not tremble to hang over some vast precipice, wherein if he fell, he were certain to be dashed into a thousand pieces, and that by so weak a supporter as a thread? This, or, in truth, much greater, is the danger of him, who is in mortal sin, who hangs over hell by the thread of life, a twist so delicate, that not a knife, but the wind, and the least fit of sickness, breaks it: wonderful is the danger where he stands, who continues but one minute in mortal sin. Death hath time enough to shoot his arrow, in the speaking of a word; the twinkling of an eye suffices: who can be pleased whilst he stands naked and disarmed in the midst of his enemies? Amongst as many enemies is man as there are ways to death, which are innumerable; it is not then safe for man to be disarmed and naked of the grace of God, in the midst of so many adversaries and dangers of death, which hourly threaten him. What person, being led to execution, would entertain himself by the way with vain conceits? We are condemned persons, who are going to execution, though by different ways, which we ourselves know not, some the straight way, and some by by-paths, but are all sure to meet in death; we ought therefore still to be prepared, and free from the distracting pleasures of this life, for fear we fall suddenly; this danger of sudden death is sufficient to make us distaste all the delights of the earth.

Death is therefore uncertain, that thou shouldst be ever certain to despise this life, and dispose thyself for the other; thou art every hour in danger of death, to the end, that thou shouldst be every hour prepared to have life; what is death but the way unto eternity? A great journey thou hast to make; wherefore dost thou not provide in time? and the rather, because thou knowest not how soon thou mayest be forced to depart. Who is there, who does not desire to have served God faithfully two years, before death should take him? If, then, thou art not sure of one, why dost thou not begin? Trust not in thy health or youth, for death steals treacherously upon us, when we least look for it; promise not thyself to-morrow, for thou knowest not whether death will come to-night.

Since, then, thou knowest not when thou art to die, think thou must die to-day; and be ever prepared for that which may ever happen; trust in the mercies of God, and implore them incessantly; but presume not to defer thy conversion for a moment; for who knows whether thou shalt ever from henceforward have time to call upon him? and having called upon him, whether thou shalt be heard? To what purpose defer we that until to-morrow, which imports so much to be done to-day, and perhaps will not be to-morrow, if not to-day? It was a very good answer that Messodamus gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day: "My friend," saith he, "why dost thou invite me against to-morrow? I durst not, for these many years, secure myself that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour." No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it.

3. To this uncertainty of death is to be added that of being only one, and only once to be tried; so as the error of dying ill cannot be amended by dying well another time. God gave unto man his senses and other parts of his body double; he gave him two eyes, that, if one failed, he might serve himself of the other; he gave him two hands, that, if one were lost, yet he might not wholly be disabled; but of deaths he gave but one; and, if that one miscarry, all is ruined. A terrible case, that the thing which most imports us, which is to die, hath neither trial, experience, nor remedy; it is but only once to be acted, and that in an instant, and upon that instant all eternity depends, in which if we fail, the error is never to be amended.

If an ignorant peasant, who had never drawn a bow, should be commanded to shoot at a mark far distant, upon condition that, if he hit it, he should be highly rewarded with many rich gifts; but if he missed it, and that at the first shoot, he should be burnt alive; in what straits would this poor man find himself! how perplexed that he should be forced upon a thing of that difficulty wherein he had no skill, and that the failing should cost him so dear as his life; but especially that it was to be only once assayed, without possibility of repairing the first fault by a second trial! This is our case: I know not how we are so pleasant; we have never died, we have no experience or skill in a thing of so great difficulty; we are only once to die, and in that all is at stake; either eternity of torments in hell, or of happiness in heaven: how live we then so careless of dying well, since for it we were born, and are but once to try it? This action is the most important of all our life; upon it depends eternity; and, if missed, without repair or amendment. These human actions which may be repeated, if one miss, the other may hit; and that which is lost in one way, may be regained in another. If a rich merchant had this year a ship sunk in the ocean, another may arrive laden with such riches as may recompense the loss of the former; but if we once fail in death, the loss is never to be repaired.

That which is but only one, is worthy of more care and esteem, because the loss of it is irreparable; let us then value the time of this life, since there is no other given wherein to gain eternity.

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A certain soldier being called in question by Lamachus, a centurion, for some misdemeanour or other committed in the camp, earnestly desired pardon for that once, and promised never to offend in the like again. But the centurion made him this answer: "In bello, bone vir, non licebit bis peccare; O sir! know you thus much, there is no offending in war twice." But in death, alas! there is no offending once; there is no hope of pardon; once dead, and always dead; he that dies once ill, is damned for ever; there is no returning again to rise, to amend what is done amiss; as death leaves a man, so judgment finds him; and as judgment leaves him, so eternity findeth him.

If a man were obliged to leap some great and desperate leap, upon condition, that, if he performed it well, he should be made master of a wealthy kingdom; but if ill, he should be chained to an oar, and made a perpetual galley-slave; without doubt this man would use much diligence in preparing himself for so hazardous an undertaking, and would often practise before an action of so great consequence, from which he expected so different fortunes. How far more different are those, which we expect from so great a leap as is from life to death; since the kingdoms of the earth, compared with that of heaven, are trash, rubbish; and the tugging at an oar, in the galleys, compared with hell, a glory. When the leap is great and dangerous, he who is to leap it, uses to fetch his career backwards, that he may leap further, and with greater force: we, therefore, knowing the danger of the leap from life to death, that we may perform it better, ought to fetch our career far back, even from the beginning of our short life; and from our first use of reason, from which we shall know, that the life we live is mortal, that at the end of it we have a great debt to pay, and that we are to discharge both use and principle, when we least think of it.

It was the saying of Iphicrates, That it is a shame for an emperor at any time to say with the fool, "Non putâram, I did not think it;" but it is a greater shame for a christian man to say, "Non putâram," I did not think there had been such a difference between a godly and wicked life; I did not think eternity was to follow after this life; I did not think I should have died so suddenly.

Let us therefore husband time in which we may gain eternity, which being once lost, we shall lose both the time of this life and the eternity of the other. How many millions are now in hell, who, whilst they were in this world, despised time, and would now be content to suffer, thousands of years, all the torments of the damned, for the redemption of one instant, in which they might, by repentance, recover the eternal life of glory, which is now lost without remedy! And yet thou castest away not only instants, but hours, days, and years! Consider what a damned person would give for some part of that time which thou losest; and take heed that thou hereafter, when there shall be no repair of that time, which thou now so vainly mispendest, be not thyself in the same grief and bitterness.

[b] Heb. xiii. 14.

We are now upon the stage, therefore we may act on our part; we have to deal with potent enemies, therefore we must be always prepared to fight; we are still in our race, therefore we must hold out to the last: let us then so act our parts, that the angels may rejoice to be spectators; let us so fight, that we may win the crown; let us so run, that we may obtain.

Consider how by time thou mayest gain eternity: look not then upon the loss of it, as upon the loss of time, but of eternity; endeavour then, whilst it lasts, to get a good bargain; for this life once past, there is no more occasion for traffic; the time appointed for storing up is but short; but the gain and profit is eternal: therefore leave the cares of this world, and elevate your whole heart and affections unto heaven, and there place your thoughts, which are to be upright and settled, in God Almighty.

I know, O Lord, I am here but as a sojourner in a strange land,[b] and not as a citizen in my own country. I am here but a tenant at will, and must shortly depart; for here I have no continuing city; but I must seek one to come, eternal in the heavens; where I shall bear a part in the heavenly quire with angels, evermore praising thy holy name; where I shall behold light incomprehensible; where I shall be in no fear of death. Farewell, then, all the world, and all the things in it; "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done;" and welcome to me, thou art welcome eternally, O Beloved, eternally thou art welcome; now I am blessed, O Lord, for I shall dwell in thy house, and shall still be praising thee.[c]

CHAPTER VIII.

Of that Moment wherein we are to die, and Life to end.

We ought seriously to consider all which is to pass in that moment of death, for which the time of this life was only bestowed upon us; and upon which depends the eternity of the other. O most dreadful point, which art the end of time, and beginning of eternity! O most fearful instant, which shuttest up the prefixed term of this life, and determinest the business of our salvation; how many things are to pass in thee! In the same instant life is to finish, all our works to be examined; and that sentence given, which is to be executed for all eternity. O last moment of life! O first of eternity! how terrible is the thought of thee, since in thee not only life is to be lost, but to be accounted for, and we then to enter into a region which we know not; in that moment I shall cease to live, in that moment I shall behold my Judge, who shall lay all my sins open before me, with all their weight, number, and enormity. In it I shall receive a strict charge of all the Divine benefits bestowed upon me; and in it a judgment shall pass upon me,

[c] Psal. lxxxiv. 4.

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either for my salvation or damnation eternal! How wonderful is it, that for so many matters, and of so great importance, there is no more time allotted than the space of an instant; no place left for reply, intercession of friends, or appeal! O fearful moment, upon which so much depends! Admirable is the high wisdom of God, which hath placed a point in the midst betwixt time and eternity, unto which all the time of this life is to relate, and upon which the whole eternity of the other is to depend! O moment, which art neither time nor eternity, but art the horizon of both, and dividest things temporal from eternal! O narrow moment! O most dilated point! wherein so many things are to be concluded, and so strict an account is to be given, and where so rigorous a sentence is to be pronounced, is ever to stand in force! A strange case, that a business of eternity is to be resolved in a moment, and no place allowed for the intercession of friends, or our own diligence!

It will be then in vain to make any addresses or application; there is none will intercede for thee, nor can give thee absolution; the rigour of the Judge in that instant wherein thou expirest will allow no further mercy: St. John says, that heaven and earth shall fly from the presence of the Judge:[a] whither wilt thou go, to what place canst thou repair, being the person against whom the process is commenced? It is therefore said, that heaven and earth shall fly, because neither the saints of heaven shall there favour thee, nor the powers of earth assist thee; there shall be place for nothing that may help thee: what, then, would a sinner give for leave to offer up one poor prayer to God, when it is too late! That which would now serve thy turn, and thou despisest, thou wouldst then have done, and canst not. Provide thyself, therefore, in time, whilst it may avail thee, and defer it not until that instant, wherein nothing can do thee good. Now thou mayest help thyself, now thou mayest find favour: expect not that moment wherein thy own endeavours will be useless, and there will be none to help or assist thee.

O what a lamentable thing will it be for a sinner, to see himself not only abandoned by men, but also by angels, and even by God himself; and to be delivered over into the power of the infernal dragon, without all hopes of escaping from him, who will seize upon his soul, and carry it to the abyss of hell, there to be tormented for ever!

How can men be careless, seeing so important a business, as is the salvation of their souls, depends upon an instant, wherein no new diligence nor preparation will avail them? Since, then, we know not when that moment will be, let us not be any moment unprovided; this is a business not to be one point of time neglected, since that point may be our damnation. What will a hundred years, spent with great austerity in the service of God, profit us, if, in the end of all those years, we shall commit some grievous sin, and death shall seize upon us before repentance?

Let no man secure himself in his past virtues, but continue them unto the end; since, if he die not in grace, all is lost; and if he doth, what matters it to have lived a thousand years in the greatest troubles and afflictions this world could lay upon him? O moment, in which the just shall forget all his labours, and shall rest assured of all his virtues! O moment! which art certain to be, uncertain when to be, and most certain never to be again! I will therefore now fix thee in my memory, that I may not hereafter meet thee in my eternal ruin and perdition.

There are three things which would make a sinner tremble: The first, when his soul is to be plucked out of his body; the second, when it is to appear before God to receive judgment; and the third, when sentence is to be pronounced. How terrible, then, is this moment, wherein all these three things so terrible are to pass! Let a christian often, whilst he lives, place himself in that instant, from whence let him behold, on one part, the time of his life which he is to live; and, on the other, the eternity whereunto he enters; and let him consider what remains unto him of that, and what he hopes for in this; in that instant a thousand years of life shall appear unto the sinner no more than one hour; and one hour of torments shall appear a thousand years. Behold thy life from this watch-tower, from this horizon, and measure it with the eternal, and thou shalt find it of no extension.

O dreadful moment, which cuts off the thread of time, and begins the web of eternity! I will therefore provide for this moment, that I may not lose eternity; this is that precious pearl, for which I will give all that I have or am; it shall ever be in my memory, I shall ever be solicitous of it, since it may every day come upon me.

For eternity depends upon death, death upon life, and life upon a thread, which may either be broken or cut; and that even when I most hope, and most endeavour to prolong it. My life is never secure; I will therefore ever fear that instant, which gives an end to time, and beginning to eternity.

THE PRAYER.

Benediction and praise be to him who is seated upon the throne, and to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us in his blood, and hath placed us in his eternal kingdom. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

The End of Temporal Life is terrible.

DEATH, because it is the end of life, is, by the philosopher, said to be the terrible of all things terrible: what would he have said, if he had known it to be the beginning of eternity, and the gate through which we enter into that vast abyss, no man knowing upon what side he shall fall into that pro-

[a] Apocal. xx.

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found and bottomless depth! If death be terrible for ending the business of life, what is it for ushering in the instant, wherein we are to give an account of life before that terrible and most just Judge, who, therefore, died that we might use it well!

It is not the most terrible part of death to leave the life of this world, but to give an account of it unto the Creator of the world; especially in such a time wherein he is to use no mercy: this is a thing so terrible, that it made holy Job to tremble, notwithstanding he had so good an account to make; who was so just, that God himself gloried in having such a servant.

Death is terrible for many weighty reasons; whereof, not the least is the sight of the offended Judge, who is not only judge but party, and a most irrefragable witness; in whose visage shall then appear such a severity against the wicked, that it is better to suffer all manner of torments, than to behold the face of his angry Judge.

How will it then amaze us, when we shall behold Jesus Christ himself alive, not a dead image; not in the humility of the cross, but upon a throne of majesty and seat of justice; not in a time of mercy, but in the hour of vengeance; not naked, with pierced hands, but armed against sinners with the sword of justice; when he shall come to judge and revenge the injuries which they have done him! God is as righteous in his justice as in his mercy; and as he hath allotted a time for mercy, so he will for justice.

As in this life the rigour of his justice is, as it were, repressed and suspended; so in that point of death, when the sinner shall receive judgment, it shall be let loose, and overwhelm him. A great and rapid river, which should, for thirty or forty years together, have its current violently stopped; what a mass of waters would it collect in so long a space! and if it should then be let loose, with what fury would it overrun and bear down all before it! and what resistance could withstand it? Since, then, the Divine justice, which the prophet Daniel compares not to an ordinary river, but to a river of fire,[a] for the greatness and fury of the rigour, shall be repressed for thirty or forty years during the life of man, what an infinity of wrath will it amass together! and with what fury will it burst out upon the miserable sinner, in the face of the offended Judge! And, therefore, the prophet Daniel saith, That a river of fire issued from his countenance, and that his throne was of flames, and the wheels of it burning fire, because all shall then be fire, rigour, and justice; he sets forth unto us his tribunal-throne with wheels, to signify thereby the force and violence of his omnipotency, in executing the severity of his justice; all which shall appear in that moment, when sinners shall be brought into judgment, when the Lord shall speak unto them in his wrath, and confound them in his fury.

O man! which hast now time, consider in what condition thou shalt see thyself in that instant; then neither the blood of Christ, shed for thee, nor the Son of God crucified, nor the intercession or prayers of the blessed saints, nor the Divine mercy itself, shall avail thee; but thou shalt only behold an incensed and revenging God, whose mercies shall then only serve to augment his justice: thou shalt perceive that none will take thy part, but all will be against thee; thou art to expect no patron, no protector, but thy virtuous actions; only they shall accompany thee; when all shall leave thee, they only shall not forsake thee: the rich man shall not then have multitudes of servants to set forth his greatness, nor well-feed lawyers to defend his process; only his good works shall bestead him, and they only shall defend him.

There, when their treasures, which have been heaped up in this world, and guarded with so much care, shall fail their masters, their alms bestowed on the poor shall not fail them; there, when their children, kindred, friends, and servants, shall all fail them, the strangers which they have lodged, the sick which they have visited, and the needy which they have succoured, shall not fail them: let us, therefore, provide for that day, and take care that our works be good ones.

It is to be admired how many dare do ill in the presence of that Judge, with whom nothing can prevail but doing well; and the wonder is much the greater, that we dare, with our evil works, offend him who is to judge them. The thief is not so impudent as to rob his neighbour, if the magistrate looks on; but would be held a fool, if he should rob or offend the magistrate himself, in his own house. How dares, then, this poor thing, man, injure the very person of his most upright and just Judge, (before whom it is most certain he shall appear,) to his face, in his own house; in so high a manner as to prefer the devil, his and our greatest enemy, before him? Every one who sins, makes, as it were, a judgment, and passes a sentence in favour of Satan against Jesus Christ; of this unjust judgment of man, the Son of God, who is most unjustly sentenced by a sinner, will, at the last day, take a most strict and severe account; let him expect, from his own injustice, how great is to be the Divine justice against him.

Let him take heed how he works, since all his actions are to be viewed and reviewed by his Redeemer. An artist who knows his work was to appear before some king, or to be examined by some great master in the same art, would strive to give it the greatest perfection of his skill: since, therefore, all our works are to appear before the King of heaven, and the chief Master of virtues, Jesus Christ, let us endeavour that they may be perfect and complete; and the rather, because he is not to examine them for curiosity, but to pass upon us a sentence, either of condemnation, or eternal happiness. Let us, then, call to mind that we are to give an account unto God Almighty, and, therefore, let us take heed what we do; let us weep for what is amiss; let us forsake our sins, and strive to do virtuous actions; let us look upon ourselves as guilty offenders, and let us stand in perpetual fear of the Judge; still reprehending himself, and saying, Ah me! wretch that I am, how shall I appear before

[a] Dan. vii.

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the tribunal of God? How shall I be able to give an account of all my actions? If thou shalt always have these thoughts, thou mayest obtain salvation; and be assured, he that seriously thinks upon death, will never have the boldness to sin.

Another cause of the terribleness of death is, the innumerable multitude of our sins, and their monstrous deformity, shall then be laid open: this is signified by the prophet Daniel, where he says, that the throne of the tribunal of God was of flaming fire; whose nature is not only to burn, but to enlighten; and, therefore, in that Divine judgment shall not only be executed the rigour of his justice, but the ugliness, likewise, of human nature shall be discovered: the Judge himself shall not only appear severe, but our sins shall all be discovered and laid open to us; and the sight of them shall make us tremble with fear and astonishment, especially when we shall perceive them to be manifest unto him, who is both judge and party. Our sins now seem unto us but light and trivial, and we see not half of them; but in our leaving of this life, we shall find them heavy and insupportable.

How shall we remain amazed, when we shall see a number of our actions to be sins, which we never thought to be such! And which is more, we shall find that to be a fault, which we thought to be a laudable work; for many actions, which, in the eyes of men, seem virtuous, will then be found vices in the sight of God; then shall be brought to light the works which we have done, and those which we have left undone; the evil of that action which we have committed, and the good of that which we have omitted: neither is there account to be taken only of the evils which we do, but of the good also, which we do not well; all will be strictly searched, and narrowly looked into, and must pass by many eyes.

The devil, as our accuser, shall frame the process of our whole life, and shall accuse us of all he knows; and if any thing shall escape his knowledge, it shall not, therefore, be concealed; for our own conscience shall cry out and accuse us of it; and lest our conscience might flatter us, or be ignorant of some faults, our guardian-angel shall then be fiscal and accuser, calling for Divine justice against us, and shall discover what our own souls are ignorant of. And if the devil, our conscience, and guardian-angel, shall fail in any thing, as not knowing all, the Judge himself, who is both party and witness, and whose Divine knowledge penetrates into the bottom of our wills, shall there declare many things for vices, which were here esteemed for virtues. O strange way of judgment, where none denies, and all accuse, even the offender accuses himself; and where all are witnesses, even the judge and party! O dreadful judgment, where there is no advocate, and four accusers, the devil, thy conscience, thy guardian-angel, and thy very Judge, who will accuse thee of many things, which thou thoughtest to have alleged for thy defence: then all shall be laid open, and confusion shall cover the sinner with the multitude of his offences. How shall he blush to see himself in the presence of the King of heaven, in so foul and squalid garments!

If a man, when he is to speak with some great prince, desire to be decently and well clad, how will he be out of countenance to appear before him dirty, and half naked! How shall then a sinner be ashamed to see himself before the Lord of all, naked of good works, bedirtied and defiled with abominable and horrid crimes!

Besides the multitude of sins whereof the whole life shall be full, the heinousness of them shall be also laid open before him, and he shall tremble at the sight of that, which he now thinks but a trivial fault; for then he shall clearly see the ugliness of sin, the dissonancy of it unto reason, the deformity it causes in the soul, the injury it doth to the Lord of the world, his ingratitude to Christ his Redeemer, the prejudice it brings unto himself; hell, into which he falls, and eternal glory, which he loses; the least of these were sufficient to cover his heart with sadness and grief; but all together, what amazement and confusion will they cause, especially when he shall perceive that sins produce an ugliness in the soul, beyond all the corporal deformities which can be imagined. Let us, therefore, avoid them now, for all are to come to light, and we must account for all, even to the last farthing: neither is this account to be made in gross only, for the greatest and most apparent sins, but even for the least and smallest: in human tribunals, the judge takes no notice of small matters, but in the courts of Divine judicature nothing passes; the least things are as diligently looked into as the greater. There is also, in the end of life, another cause of much terror unto sinners, which is the lively knowledge which they shall have of the Divine benefits received, and the charge which shall be laid against them for their great ingratitude and abuse of them: in that instant, sinners are not only to stand in fear of their own bad works, but of the grace and benefits of God Almighty conferred upon them.

Another confusion shall cover them, when they shall see what God hath done to oblige and assist them toward their salvation; and what they, to the contrary, have done, to draw upon them their own damnation: they shall tremble to see what God did for their good, and that he did so much as he could do no more, all which hath been misemployed and abused by themselves.

We will consider every one of these benefits by themselves. The first which occurs is, that of the creation: and what could God do more, since in this one benefit of thy creation, he gave thee all what thou art, both in soul and body? If, wanting an arm, thou wouldst esteem thyself much obliged, and be very thankful unto him who should bestow one upon thee, which were sound, strong, and useful; why art thou not so to God, who hath given thee arms, heart, soul, body, and all?

Consider what thou wert, before he gave thee a being; nothing: and now thou enjoyest, not only a being, but the best being of the elemental world: betwixt being and not being, there is an infinite distance; see, then, what thou owest unto thy Creator;

and thou shalt find thy debt to be no less than infinite, since he hath not only given thee a being, but a noble being, and that not by necessity, but out of an infinite love, and by election; making choice of thee amongst an infinity of men possible, whom he might have created. If lots were to be cast among a hundred persons for some honourable charge, how fortunate would he be esteemed, who should draw the lot from so many competitors! Behold, then, thy own happiness, who, from an absolute nothing, hath lighted upon a being amongst an infinity of creatures possible; and whence proceeds this singular favour, but from God? who, out of those numberless millions, hath picked out thee, he having many others, who, if he had created them, would have served him better than thyself: besides this, he not only created thee by election, and gave thee a noble being; but supernatural happiness being no way due unto thy nature, he created thee for it, and gave thee for thy end the most high and eminent that could be imagined, to wit, the eternal possession of thy Creator.

It being, then, so great a benefit to have created thee, it is yet a greater to have preserved and suffered thee until this instant, without casting thee into a thousand hells for thy sins and offences. From how many, for one only fault committed, hath he withdrawn his preservation, and suffered them to die in that sin for which they are now in hell! and some of them, if they had been pardoned, would have proved more grateful than thou! Behold how many angels, for their first offence, he threw headlong down from heaven, and expected them no longer, and yet still expects thee.

Consider thou owest him for preserving thee, as much as for creating thee; preservation being a continued creation; and more for preserving thee, although his enemy. In thy creation, although thou didst not deserve a being, yet thou demerited it not; but in thy preservation thou hast deserved the contrary, which is, to be forsaken and abandoned.

Consider the benefit thou receivest by the incarnation of the Son of God; by which thou art delivered from sin and hell, at such a time, when thy miserable condition was desperate of all other remedy; and he hath exalted thee to his grace, and the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven; and this he did with such singular love, even to the annihilating, as it were, himself, that he might exalt thee, taking upon himself thy nature, that he might only confer an honour upon thee, which he would not to the angels. All is great, all is transcendent in this unspeakable goodness; see what God could do more for thee, and see that thou mayest do much more for him, and dost not.

Consider the benefit of our redemption by the death and passion of Christ: what could the Son of God do more for thee, than die and shed his blood for thee, and that not with an ordinary death, but so ignominious, as it seems he could not suffer more? Set before thy eyes Christ crucified upon mount Calvary; if a man more infamous be imaginable; executed publicly between two thieves, as a traitor and an heretic, broaching false doctrine, and making himself king, as a traitor unto Cæsar.

Two crimes so infamous, as they not only defame the person who commits them, but stain and infect his stock and lineage. Behold in what poverty he died, if greater can be thought on; to the end thou mayest see, if it were possible he should do more for thee than what he did. Whilst he lived, he had not whereon to repose his head; neither found he one drop of water, to refresh his sacred lips; even the earth refused him, wanting whereon to rest his feet. Behold with what grief and pains he expired; since, from head to foot, he was but one continued wound; his feet and hands were pierced with nails, and his head with thorns.

Who would not be amazed at the goodness and piety of a great emperor, who, having a desire to pardon a notorious traitor, should, rather than abate one jot of his justice, take upon him the habit and shape of that traitor, and suffer publicly in the market-place, that the offender might be spared? Thus did God, taking upon him the form of a servant, and dying upon the cross, to free condemned man from eternal death.

Consider, then, how dreadful it shall be unto a sinner, when he shall receive a charge, not only of his own being, and his own life, but also of the being and life of God; of the incarnation, passion, life, and death, of Christ our Redeemer, who hath so often given himself in the sacrament of his body and blood.

The murderer, who stands charged with the life of a man, although it be of some wicked person, yet fears to be apprehended and brought to judgment. How is it, then, that he, who is charged with the life of God, tremble not? O how fearful a thing is it, when a vile creature shall enter into judgment with his Creator; and shall be demanded an account of the blood of Christ, whose value is infinite! What account can he give of such a benefit, and of all the rest which he hath received, even from the greatest unto the least?

When Christ shall say unto him: "I, when thou hadst no being, gave thee one; inspired thee with a soul, and placed thee above all things that are upon the earth. I, for thee, created heaven, air, sea, earth, and all things; and yet am dishonoured by thee, and held most vile and base; and yet, for all this, have not ceased to do thee good, and bestowed upon thee innumerable benefits; for thy sake, being God, I was content to make myself a servant; was buffeted, spit upon, and condemned to a punishment of slaves; and to redeem thee from death, suffered the death of the cross. It is heaven I intended for thee, and from thence sent thee the Holy Ghost. I invited thee unto the kingdom of heaven; offered myself to be thy head, thy spouse, thy food, thy drink, thy shepherd; I chose thee for the heir of heaven, and drew thee out of darkness into light."

To such excess of love, what have we to answer, but to stand astonished and confounded, that we have been so ungrateful, and given occasion to the devil, of one of the greatest scorns and injuries

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which could be put upon our Redeemer? when he shall say unto him, "Thou createdst man; for him wast born in poverty, lived in labour, and died in pain and torment; I have done nothing for him but sought to damn him into a thousand hells; and yet, for all this, it is I whom he strives to please, and not thee. Thou dost prepare for him a crown of eternal glory, I desire to torment him in hell; and yet he had rather serve me without interest, than thee for thy promise of so great a reward. I should have been ashamed to have created and redeemed a wretch, so ungrateful unto him, from whom he hath received so great benefits. But, since he loves me better than thee, let him be mine, unto whom he hath so often given up himself."

We are not only to give an account of these general benefits, but of those which are more particular: of the good examples which we have seen, of the instructions we have heard, of the inspiration which hath been sent us. Let us tremble, that we are so careless of that, for which all the care in the world is not sufficient. Now is the time of benefiting ourselves: if we shall now despise it, in what case shall we be? Let us not mispend the time of this life, since so severe an account will be demanded of all the benefits which we have received. Let us take heed what use we make of this temporal life; let us not lose it, since we are to answer for every part of it. This time is bestowed upon us, wherein to gain heaven; and a most strict account will be demanded of us, if we despise it. It is not ours for which we are to answer; we are not the lords of time; let us not, therefore, dispose of it for our own pleasure, but for the service of God, whose it is.

THE PRAYER.

O God, every way most perfect and good! which art so scrupulous in thy justice, and so indulgent in thy mercy; rigorous with thyself, that thou mightest be merciful unto us: O God, infinitely good, infinitely holy, infinitely just and perfect! we magnify thee, we praise thee, we glorify thee; we give thanks unto thee, heavenly Father, for all the blessings thou hast bestowed upon us.

CHAPTER X.

The End of all Time.

AFTER we have finished the time of this life, the end of all time is to succeed, which is to give a period unto all which we leave behind us. Let man, therefore, know, that those things which he leaves behind, for his memory after death, are as vain as those he enjoyed in his life. Let him raise proud mausoleums; let him erect statues of marble; let him build populous cities; let him leave a numerous kindred; let him stamp his name in brass, and fix his memory with a thousand nails; all must have an end. His cities shall sink, his statues fall, his family perish, his memory be defaced: and all shall end, because all time must end. Not only our pleasures and delights are to end in death, but our memories, at the farthest, are to end with time: and since all are to conclude, all are to be despised as vain and perishing.

If the death of a monarch or prince of some corner of the world, prognosticated by an eclipse or comet, cause a fear and amazement in the beholders; what shall the death of the whole world, and with it all things temporal, and of time itself,[a] foretold by angels, with prodigious apparitions and dreadful noise, produce in us? Time shall end, and the world shall die; and that, if we may so say, a most horrible and disastrous death. How much the whole world, and the whole race of mankind, exceeds one particular person, by so much shall the universal end surpass in terror the particular end of this life.

Let us look upon the strange manner of the end of the world, which, being so terrible, gives us to understand the vanity and deceit of all things in it. As it is usual in wars to skirmish, and to make inroads before the day of battle; so before that dreadful day, wherein the army of vengeance and of all punishments are to encounter with the army of sin, the Lord shall, from divers parts, send forth several calamities, as plagues, famine, earthquakes, wars, inundations, droughts; which shall be forerunners of that great day of battle; which shall, like light horsemen, scour the campania. And if those miseries do now so much afflict us, what shall they then do, when God shall add unto them his utmost force and power; when all creatures shall arm against sinners, and the zeal of the Divine justice shall be their captain-general? Which the wise man declares in these words: "His zeal shall take up arms, and shall arm the creatures, to revenge him of his enemies: he shall put on justice as a breastplate, and righteous judgment as a helmet; and he shall take equity as a buckler, and shall sharpen his wrath as a lance, and the circuit of the earth shall fight for him; thunderbolts shall be sent from the clouds, as a well-shooting bow, and shall not fail to hit the mark; and hail shall be sent, full of stormy wrath; the waters of the sea shall threaten them, the rivers shall combat furiously; a most stormy wind shall rise against them, and shall divide them as a whirlwind."[b]

Very dreadful are these words, although they contain but the war, which three of the elements are to make against sinners. But not only fire, air, and water, but earth also, and heaven, shall fall upon them, and confound them; for all creatures shall express their fury in that day, and shall rise against man. And if the clouds shall discharge thunderbolts and stones upon their heads, the heavens shall shoot no less balls than stars, which shall fall from thence. If hail, no bigger than little stones, falling but from the clouds, destroy

[a] Apoc. c. 10.

[b] Sap. 5.

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the fields, and sometimes kill the lesser sort of cattle; what shall pieces of stars do, falling from the firmament or upper region?

As in man, who is called the lesser world, when he is to die, the humours, which are as the elements, are troubled and out of order; his eyes, which are as the sun and moon, are darkened; his other senses, which are as the lesser stars, fall away; his reason, which is as the celestial virtues, is off the hinges: so in the death of the greater world, before it dissolves, and expire, the sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, the stars shall fall, and the whole world shall tremble with a horrid noise. If the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies, which are held incorruptible, shall suffer such changes, what shall be done with those frail and corruptible elements of earth, air, and water? If this inferior world doth depend upon the heavens, those celestial bodies being altered and broken in pieces, in what estate must the lower elements remain, when the virtues of heaven shall falter, and the wandering stars shall lose their way, and fail to observe their order?

How shall the air be troubled with violent and sudden whirlwinds, dark tempests, horrible thunders, and furious flashings of lightning! How shall the earth tremble with dreadful earthquakes, opening herself with a thousand mouths, and casting forth, as it were, whole volcanoes of fire and sulphur; and, not content to overthrow the loftiest towers, shall swallow up high mountains, and bury cities in her entrails? How shall the sea then rage, mounting her proud waves above the clouds, as if they meant to overwhelm the whole earth? The roaring of the ocean shall astonish those who are far distant from the sea, and inhabit in the midst of the firm land. Therefore, it is said, that there shall be in the earth afflictions of nations, for the confusion of the noise of the sea.

What shall men do in this general perturbation of nature? They shall remain amazed and pale as death. What comfort shall they have? They shall stand gazing one upon another, and every one shall conceive a new fear, by beholding in his neighbour's face the image of his own death. What fear and horror shall then possess them, when they shall hourly expect the success and dire effects portended by those monstrous prodigies! All commerce shall then cease; the market-places shall be unpeopled, and the tribunals remain solitary and silent; none shall then be ambitious of honours, none shall seek after pastimes and new-invented pleasures; nor shall the covetous wretch then busy himself with the care of his treasures; none shall frequent the palaces of kings and princes, but, through fear, shall forget even to eat and drink; all their care shall be employed how to escape those deluges, earthquakes and lightning; seeking for places of security, which they shall not meet with. Who will remember the sumptuous buildings he hath reared, the beauty he hath once doted upon?

If we shall forget what we ourselves most valued and gloried in, how shall we remember that of others? What remembrance shall there then be of the acts of the great Alexander? of the learning of Aristotle? of the wisdom of Solomon? and of the endowments of the most renowned men of the world? Their fame shall remain from thenceforward for ever buried, and shall die with the world for a whole eternity.

The mariners, when in some furious tempest they are upon point of sinking, how are they amazed at the rage of the watery element! How grieved and afflicted with ruin, which threatens them! What prayers and vows do they send up to heaven! How disinterested are they of all worldly matters, since they fling their wealth and riches into the sea, for which they have run such hazard! In what condition shall be, then, the inhabitants of the earth; when not only the sea, with its raging, but heaven and earth, with a thousand prodigies, shall affright them? When the sun shall put on a robe of mourning, and amaze them with the horror of his darkness; when the moon shall look like blood, the stars fall, and the earth shall shake them with its unquiet trembling; when the whirlwinds shall throw them off their legs, and frequent and thick flashes of lightning dazzle their sight, and confound their understanding: what shall sinners then do, for whose sake all these fearful wonders shall happen?

Let us, by the particular changes which have happened, judge how dreadful the conjunction of so many and so great calamities, in the end of the world, all together will be. But all the alterations past of the elements were no more than skirmishes; what shall then be the battle which they are to give unto sinners, when the heavens shall shoot their arrows, and give the alarm, with prodigious thunders, and shall declare their wrath with horrible apparitions?

In the last days, the sun shall hide his beams under a mourning garment; and the moon shall clothe herself with blood, to signify the wars, which all the creatures are to make with fire and blood, against those who have despised their Creator. When on one side, the earth shall rouse itself up against them, and shall shake them off her back, as unwilling to endure their burdens any longer; when the sea shall pursue and assault them within their own houses; and the air shall not permit them to be safe in the fields. Certainly, it shall then be no wonder, if they shall desire the mountains to cover them, and the hills to hide them within their caverns. What shall it be, then, when the Lord of all shall arm all the elements against man, and shall give the alarm to all creatures, to revenge him upon him, so ungrateful for his infinite benefits?

The creatures now groan, to see themselves abused by man, in contempt of his and their Creator; but they shall then shake off their yokes, and shall revenge themselves of the grievances which they suffer under him, and the injuries he hath done unto the Creator of all: all the elements, all creatures, the whole world, shall be up in arms against man; the summer shall be changed into winter, and winter into the summer; no creature shall observe the prefixed law, with him who hath not observed the law of his Creator, that so they may revenge both God and themselves: but more terrible, then, is that which

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follows, that, after so many calamities, the bottomless pit, which is hell, shall burst open, and out of his profound throat belch forth so thick a smoke, as shall wholly darken the sun and air; from which smoke shall sally forth a multitude of deformed locusts, which, in great swarms, shall disperse themselves over the face of the whole earth, and leaving the fields, herbs, and what is sown, fall upon such men as have been unfaithful unto God, and shall, for five months, torment them with greater rage than scorpions.[c]

Some doctors understand those locusts according to the letter; that they shall be a certain kind of true locusts, but of a strange figure and fierceness; others, that they shall be devils in hell, in the shape of locusts. And it is no marvel, that, in the destruction of the world, devils shall appear in visible forms; since in the destruction of Babylon, they appeared in divers figures of beasts, as was prophesied by Isaiah.

But how shall it then fare with sinners, when, after all, shall come that general fire, so often foretold, which shall either fall from heaven, or ascend out of hell, or, (according to Albertus Magnus,) proceed from both, and shall devour and consume all it meets with? Whither shall the miserable fly, when that river of flames, or, (to say better,) that inundation and deluge of fire, shall so encompass them, as no place of surety shall be left; where nothing can avail but a holy life; when all besides shall perish, in that universal ruin of the whole world?

What lamentations were in Rome, when it burnt for seven days together! What shrieks were heard in Troy, when it was wholly consumed with flames! What howling and astonishment in Pentapolis, when those cities were destroyed with fire from heaven! What weeping was there in Jerusalem, when they beheld the house of God, the glory of their kingdom, the wonder of the world, involved in fire and smoke! Imagine what these people felt; they saw their houses and goods on fire, and no possibility of saving them; when the husband heard the shrieks and cries of his dying wife; the father, of his little children; and, unawares, perceived himself so encompassed with flames, that he could neither relieve them, nor free himself.

What then shall be the straits and exigencies of that general burning, when those who shall escape earthquakes, inundations of the sea, the fury of whirlwinds, and lightning from heaven, shall fall into that universal fire, that deluge of flames, which shall consume all, and make an end of men and their memories! Of those who lived before the flood, and were masters of the world for so long a time, except it be of some few, we know nothing. Those heroical actions, which, certainly, some of them performed, and gained by them incomparable fame, lie buried in the waters; and there remains no more memory of those who did them, than if they had never been born: no more permanent shall be the fame of those, which now resounds in the ears of the whole world: Cyrus, Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, Cæsar Augustus, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Euclid, and the rest; no more world, no more fame; this fire shall end all the smoke.

And, indeed, the world may be said to be like a house full of smoke; which in such manner blinds the eyes, as it suffers not those within it to see things as they are; and so the world, with its deceits, so disguise the nature of human things, as we perceive not what they are; ambition and human honour (which the world so much dotes after) are no more than smoke, without substance, which so blinds our understandings, that we know not the truth of that we so much covet. It is no marvel, that so much smoke comes at last to end in flames.

What shall it then profit the worldlings, to have rich vessels of gold and silver, curious embroideries, precious tapestries, pleasant gardens, sumptuous palaces, and all what the world now esteems, when they shall, with their own eyes, behold their costly palaces burnt, their rich and curious pieces of gold melted, and their flourishing and pleasant orchards consumed, without power to preserve them or themselves? All shall burn, and with it the world, and all the memory and fame of it shall die; and that which mortals thought to be immortal, shall then end and perish.

No more shall Aristotle be cited in the schools, nor Ulpian alleged in the tribunals; no more shall Plato be read amongst the learned, nor Cicero imitated by the orators; no more shall Seneca be admired by the understanding, nor Alexander extolled among captains; all fame shall then die, and all memory be forgotten. O vanity of men, whose memorials are as vain as themselves, which in few years perish, and that which lasts longest can endure no longer than the world! What became of that statue of massy gold, which Gorgias, the Leontine, placed in Delphos, to eternize his name; and that of Gabrion, in Rome; and that of Berosus, with the golden tongue, in Athens; and innumerable others, erected to great captains, in brass or hardest marble? Certainly, many years since they are perished: if not, they shall perish in this great and general conflagration; only virtue no fire can burn.

Three hundred and sixty statues were erected by the Athenians unto Demetrius Phalereus, for having governed their commonwealth ten years with great virtue and prudence: but of so little continuance were those trophies, that those very emblems, which were raised by gratitude, were soon after destroyed by envy; and he himself who saw his statues set up in so great a number, saw them also pulled down; but he still retained this comfort, which christians may learn from him, that, beholding how they threw his images unto the ground, he could say, at last, "they cannot overthrow those virtues for which they were erected." If they were true virtues, he said well: for those neither envy can demolish, nor human power destroy.

And, which is more, the Divine power will not, in this general destruction of the world, consume them, but will preserve, in his eternal memory, as many as shall persevere in goodness, and die in his holy grace; for only charity, holiness, and christian virtues, shall not end when the world ends.

[c] Apoc. c. 9.

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The rich man shall not be preserved by his wealth, nor the mighty by his power, nor the crafty by his wiles; only the just shall be freed by his virtues. None shall escape the terror of that day, by fast-sailing ships, or speed of horses; the sea itself shall burn, and the fire shall overtake the swiftest post; only holiness and charity shall defend the servants of God.

How then shall I, miserable sinner, in this universal conflagration, behave myself? What counsel shall I take in that extremity, when my own conscience shall be my accuser, and when I shall behold the world all on fire about me? Whither shall I flee for safety, when no place will afford it? Shall I climb unto the mountains? thither the flames will follow me. Shall I descend into the valleys? thither the fire will pursue me. Shall I shut up myself in some strong castle or tower? But there the wrath of God will assault me, and the fire will pass the fosses, consume the bulwarks, and make an end of them and me. What shall I, poor wretch, do? Let thy power, O Lord, triumph over my misery, and glorify thyself in my greatest extremities; and thy will, O Lord, be done, if it be thy Divine pleasure, in my confusion.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the last Day of Time, and of the Judgment which is to pass upon all Things in the World.

WE must suppose, that the coming of Christ to judgment is to be with greater terror and majesty, than hath yet been manifested by any of the Divine Persons, either in himself, or any of his creatures. If an angel which represented God, and was only to promulgate the law, came with that terror and majesty unto mount Sinai, as made the Hebrew people, though purified and prepared for his coming, to quake and tremble; what shall the Lord of the law do, when he himself comes to take an account of the law, to revenge the breach of it? With what terror and majesty shall he appear unto sinners, and to such which are unprepared for his reception, who are then to be all present, and judged in that last day of time! For after those prodigious thunders, lightnings, earthquakes, and prodigies; after burning in that deluge of fire the sinners of the world, the saints remaining still alive, that that article of our faith may be literally fulfilled, "From thence he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead;" the heavens shall open, and over the valleys of Jehosaphat, the Redeemer of the world, attended by all the angels of heaven, invisible forms of admirable splendour, shall, with a Divine majesty, descend to judge it.

Before the Judge shall be borne his standard, which Chrysostom and divers other doctors affirm, shall be the very cross on which he suffered.[a] Then shall the just meet (as the apostle says) their Redeemer in the air; who at his issuing forth of the heavens, shall, with a voice that may be heard of all the world, pronounce this his commandment, "Arise, ye dead, and come unto judgment;" which shall be proclaimed by four angels, in the four quarters of the world, with such vehemence, that the sound shall pierce unto the infernal region; from whence the souls of the damned shall issue forth, and re-enter their bodies, which shall from thenceforward suffer the terrible torments of hell. The souls of the blessed filling their bodies with the four gifts of glory, shall make them more resplendent than the sun, and with the gift of agility shall join themselves with those just, who remain alive in the air in their passible bodies; which being yet mortal, and therefore not able to endure these vehement affections of the heart, of joy, desire, reverence, love, and admiration of Christ, shall then die, and in that instant behold the Divine essence, after which their souls shall be again immediately united to their bodies, before they can be corrupted, or so much as fall unto the ground, and thenceforward continue glorious; for in the moment wherein they die, they shall be purified from those noxious humours and qualities wherewith our bodies are now infected.

And therefore it was convenient they should first die, that being so cleansed from all filth, they might, by the restitution of their blessed souls, receive gifts of glory. Who can express the joy of those happy souls, when they shall take possession of their new, glorious, and beautiful bodies, which were long since eaten by worms or wild beasts, some four, some five thousand years ago turned into dust and ashes? What thanks shall they give unto God, who, after so long a separation, hath restored them to their ancient companions? But the souls of the damned, how shall they rage and curse their own flesh, since, to please and pamper it, hath been the occasion of their torments and eternal unhappiness!

The reprobates being then in the valley of Jehosaphat,[b] and the predestinate in the air, the Judge shall appear above mount Olivet, unto whom the clouds shall serve as a chariot, and his most glorious body shall cast forth rays of such incomparable splendour, as the sun shall appear but as coal; for even the predestinate shall shine as the sun, but the light and brightness of Christ shall far exceed them, as the sun doth the least star; the which most admirable sight shall be yet more glorious by those thousand millions of excellent and heavenly spirits which shall attend him, who, having formed themselves aërial bodies of more or less splendour, according to their hierarchy and order, shall fill the whole space betwixt heaven and earth with unspeakable beauty and variety.

The Saviour of the world shall sit upon a throne of great majesty, his countenance shall be most mild and peaceable towards the good, and, though the same, most terrible unto the bad; out of his sacred wounds shall issue beams of light towards the just,

[a] Chrysost. tom. iii. de Cruce.

[b] Zac. c. 1.

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full of love and sweetness; but unto sinners full of fire and wrath, who shall weep bitterly for the evils which issue from them; so great shall be the majesty of Christ, that the miserable damned, and the devils themselves, notwithstanding all the hate they bear him, shall yet prostrate themselves and adore him, and, to their greater confusion, acknowledge him for Lord and God;[c] and those who have most blasphemed him, shall then bow before him, fulfilling the promises of the eternal Father, that all things should be subject unto him, that he would make his enemies his footstool, and that all knees should bend before him: here also shall the sinners behold him in glory, whom they have despised for vain trifles of the earth.

What an amazement will it be to see him King of so great majesty, who suffered so much ignominy upon the cross, and even from those, whom he redeemed with his most precious blood! What will they then say, who in scorn crowned the sacred temples of the Lord with thorns, put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, clothed him in some old and broken garment of purple, buffeted and spit upon his blessed face? I know not how the memory of this doth not burst our hearts with compunction!

There shall be thrones for the apostles, and those saints who, poor in spirit, have left all for Christ, who, sitting now as judges with their Redeemer, and condemning by their good example the scandalous lives of sinners, shall approve the sentence of the supreme Judge, and declare his great justice before the world, which with the wicked shall remain confounded and amased. The tyrants who have afflicted and put to death the holy martyrs, what will they now say, when they shall see them in this glory? Those who trampled under foot the justice and right of the poor of Christ, what will they do when they shall behold their judges? How confounded shall be the kings of the earth, when they shall behold their vassals in glory! and lords, when they shall see their slaves amongst the angels, and themselves in equal rank with devils! The good he shall place upon his right hand, elevated in the air, that all the world may honour them as holy; and the wicked shall stand far at his left, remaining upon the earth to their own confusion, and scorn of all.

Immediately the books of all men's consciences shall be opened, and their sins published to the whole world; the most secret sins of their hearts, and those filthy acts which were committed in private, shall all, to their great shame and confusion, be then discovered; the virtuous actions of the just, how secretly soever performed, their holy thoughts, their pious desires, their pure intentions, their good works, which the world now disesteems as madness, shall then be manifested, and they for them be honoured by the whole world.

Nothing shall be of greater confusion unto sinners, than to behold those who have committed equal and greater sins than themselves to be there in glory; because they made use of the time of repentance, which they despised and neglected. This confusion shall be augmented by that inward charge, which God shall lay against them of his Divine benefits, unto which their angel-guardians shall assist, by giving testimony how often they have dissuaded them from their evil courses, and how rebellious and refractory they have still been to their holy inspirations. The saints shall accuse them, that they have laughed at their good counsels; and shall set forth the dangers whereunto they themselves have been subject by their ill example.

The just Judge shall then immediately pronounce sentence in favour of the good, in these words of love and mercy, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom which was prepared for you from the creation of the world." O what joy shall fill the saints! And what spite and envy shall burst the hearts of sinners! But more, when those miserable wretches shall hear the severe Judge say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for Satan and his angels:" with this sentence they shall remain for ever overthrown, and covered with eternal sorrow and confusion. "Depart from me!" Alas, dread Sovereign, whither shall they go to avoid thy displeasure! Art thou not in heaven, in hell, and every where? Dost thou not fill heaven and earth? Dost not thou hold the universe in thy hands? And doth not thy power comprehend all things? To whom shall they betake themselves? Art not thou he who hast the words of eternal life, who art even thyself life everlasting? Whither wilt thou have these miserable creatures to retire themselves? Do what they can, they cannot go out of thee, since in thee all things have motion, being, and life. Begone, barren trees, twice dead, rooted out of the blessed earth, and are only fit to be cast into the fire; you are not worthy to take up place in the paradise of heaven, where no trees are planted but such as bear good fruit.

At that instant, the fire of that general burning shall invest those miserable creatures;[d] the earth shall open, and hell shall enlarge its throat to swallow them for all eternity, accomplishing that malediction, "Let death come upon them, and let them sink alive into hell;"[e] snares, fire, and sulphur shall rain upon sinners: but the just shall then rejoice, singing that song of the Lamb related by St. John, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Omnipotent! just and righteous are thy ways, King of all eternity! Who will not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name?"[f] With thousand other anthems of joy and jubilee they shall ascend above the stars in a most glorious triumph, until they arrive in the imperial heaven, where they shall be placed in thrones of glory, which they shall enjoy for an eternity of eternities.

In the mean time, the earth, which was polluted for having sustained the bodies of the damned, shall be purified in that general burning; and then shall be renewed the earth, the heavens, the stars, and the sun, which shall shine seven times more than before: and the creatures, which have been here violated and oppressed by the abuse of man, shall then rejoice to see themselves freed from the

[c] Psal. cix. 1 Cor. xv. Phil. ii. [d] Psal. liv. [e] Psal. x. [f] Apoc. xv.

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tyranny of sin and sinners; and, joyful of the triumph of Christ, shall put on mirth and gladness.

This is the end wherein all time is to determine; and this the catastrophe, so fearful unto the wicked, where all things temporal are to conclude: let us therefore take heed how we use them; and that we may use them well, let us be mindful of this last day, this day of justice and calamity, this day of terror and amazement; the memory whereof will serve much for the reformation of our lives: let us think of it, and fear it; for it is the most terrible of all things terrible, and the consideration most profitable and acceptable to cause in us a holy fear of God, and to convert us unto him. While I live, I will therefore ever preserve in my memory this day of terror, that I may hereafter enjoy security for the whole eternity of God. Above all things, I will keep before my eyes the last of all days; and all the moments of my life I will think, and for ever think, of eternity.

LIBER II.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Greatness of Things Eternal.

Although all temporal things are in themselves little and base, yet unto him, who shall consider the greatness and majesty of the Eternal, they will appear much less, and contemptible.

The greatness of the glory eternal consists not only in the eternity of its duration, but in its intension also, as being supreme, and without limits in its excellency; and therefore we ought not to think much of the sufferings of a thousand years' torments, or to remain in hell itself for some long time, so we might behold Christ in his glory, and enjoy the company of saints, and be partakers of so great a happiness, but for one day.

Such is the beauty of righteousness, such the joy of that eternal light, of that immutable truth and wisdom, that although we were not to continue in it above one day, yet for so short a time, a thousand years in this life, replenished with delights, and abundance of all goods temporal, were justly to be despised: "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand." And if those joys of heaven were short, and those of earth eternal, yet we ought to forsake these for those. What shall it be to possess them for an eternity, when the joy of each day shall be equivalent to many years? If the beauties of all creatures, heavens, earth, flowers, pearls, and all other things that could give any light, were all comprised in one thing; if every one of the stars yielded as much light as the sun, and the sun shone as bright as all they together: all this so united, would be, in respect of the beauty of God Almighty, as a dark night in respect of the clearest day. As Ahasuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and seventy provinces, made a great feast for all his princes, which lasted one hundred and eighty-one days; so shall this King of heaven and earth make his great supper of glory, which shall last for all eternity, for the setting forth of his majesty, and for the honour and entertainment of his servants; where the joys shall be such, as neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive: "Come, eat and drink, and be filled, my beloved," shall the King of heaven say; "this feast of mine shall never be ended, there shall come no sorrow after it." O life of lives, surpassing all life! O everlasting life! O life, blessed for evermore, where there is joy without sorrow! O the inanity and emptiness of temporal goods! what proportion do they hold with this greatness, since they are so poor, that even time, from whence they have their being, makes them tedious, and not to be endured? Who could continue a whole month without any diversion, in hearing the choicest music? Nay, who could pass a day free from weariness, without some thought of pleasures? But such is the greatness of those joys which God hath prepared for them who love and fear him, as we shall still desire them afresh, and they will not cloy us in a whole eternity.

Eternal glory is great, both in respect of its purity, being free from all ill; and in respect of its perfection, being highly and excellently good: it doth as far exceed all the grandeur of this world, as the heavens are distant from the earth; and how far that is, we shall form some conception of it, as much as our weakness is able to express.

The most famous mathematician, Christopher Clavius, says, that from the sphere of the moon, which is the lowest heaven, unto the earth, are one hundred and twenty thousand six hundred and thirty miles; from the heaven of the sun, four millions thirty thousand nine hundred and twenty-three miles; and from the firmament, or eighth heaven, one hundred sixty-one millions eight hundred fourscore and four thousand nine hundred and forty-three miles. Here Plato wills the mathematicians to cease their inquiries; for from hence there is no rule of measuring further; but, without all doubt, it is much further from thence to the imperial heaven; for the only thickness of the starry sphere is said to contain as much as the whole space betwixt that and the earth; insomuch as if a millstone were

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thrown from the highest of the firmament, and should every hour fall two hundred miles, it would be ninety years before it arrived at the earth. The mathematicians also, and some learned interpreters of the holy Scripture, affirm, that the distance from the earth unto the highest of the firmament, is less than that from thence to the lowest of the imperial heaven; and therefore conclude, if one should live two thousand years, and every day should travel a hundred miles, he should not in all that time reach the lowest of the firmament; and if, after that, he should also travel other two thousand years, he should not reach the highest of it; and from thence four thousand years before he arrived at the lowest of the imperial heaven. O blessed Jesu, which makes us in a moment despatch so great a journey, and in one little instant brings the souls of the just thither; so short is the way which brings us to heaven, that in an instant the righteous shall mount above the sun and moon, tread the stars under their feet, and enter into the heaven of the blessed.

Proportionable unto this distance of place, is the advantage which the greatness of heaven hath above that of earth, and the same holds in their blessings: let us mount, then, with this consideration, thither, and from that height let us despise all the vanities of this world. All the kingdoms of the earth are but as a point, yea, but as a point of a point: he is higher than the world, who cares not for the world: but of heaven, Baruch could say, "How great is the house of God, how large is the place of his possession!"[a] It is great, and hath no end; high, and unmeasurable. If one, who had ever been bred in an obscure dungeon, were told, that above the earth there was a sun, which enlightened the whole world, and cast his beams far above a hundred thousand leagues in circumference, all the discourses which could be made unto such a one, would hardly make him conceive the brightness and beauty of the sun: much less can the glory of those things of the other world be made to appear unto us, though set forth with the greatest beauty the world affords.

O what fools then are they, who, for one point of earth, lose so many leagues of heaven! who, for one short pleasure, lose things so immense and durable! O the greatness of the omnipotency and goodness of God, who hath prepared such celestial mansions and glorious things for the humble and little ones who serve him! "My soul, O Lord my God, thirsteth after thee;[b] I will behold thy face in righteousness; for in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.[c] Whatsoever I can wish for is present with thee, whatsoever can be desired, is in thee in abundance; thou shalt make me drink of the river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light I shall see light.[d] How happy shall I be, when I shall see thee in thyself, and thee in me, and myself in thee, living in everlasting felicity, and enjoying the beatifical vision of thee for evermore! I will therefore trust in thee, my Lord God, for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting happiness, and joys without end."[e]

[a] Bar. c. iii. [b] Psal. xvii. 15. [c] Psal. xvi. 11.

CHAPTER II.

The Greatness of the Eternal Honour of the Just.

THE greatness of those goods of the other life, are honours, riches, pleasures, and all the blessings both of body and soul: of each whereof we shall say some thing apart; and will begin with that of honour.

The nature of honour is to be a reward of virtue; and by how much greater the reward is, by so much the greater is the honour which is conferred: what honour shall it then be, when God shall give unto those who served him, not only to tread upon the stars, to inhabit the palaces of heaven, to be lords of the world, but transcending all that is created, and finding nothing amongst his riches sufficient to reward them, shall give them his own infinite essence, to enjoy, as a recompence of their holiness, not for a day, but to all eternity!

The highest honour which the Romans bestowed upon their greatest captains, was to grant them a day of triumph, and, in that, permission to wear a crown of grass or leaves, which withered the day following: but the triumph of the just shall be eternal; and their never-fading crown is God himself. O most happy diadem! O most precious garland of the saints, which is of as great worth and value as is God himself! Sapores, king of the Persians, was most ambitious of honour, and would therefore be called the brother of the sun and moon, and friend to the planets. This vain prince erected a most glorious throne, which he placed on high, and thereon sat in great majesty, having under his feet a globe of glass, whereon were artificially represented the motions of the sun, the moon, and stars; and to sit crowned above this fantastical heaven, he esteemed as a great honour. What shall be, then, the honour of the just, who shall truly and really sit above the sun, the moon, and firmament, crowned by the hand of God himself; and that with a crown of gold, graven with the seal of holiness and the glory of honour? And this honour arrives at that height, that Christ himself tells us, "He who shall overcome, I will give him to sit with me in my throne; even as I have overcome, and have sitten with the Father in his throne."[a] O happy labour of the victorious, and glorious combat of the just, against the vices and temptations of the world, whose victory deserves so inestimable a crown!

How great shall be that glory, when a just soul shall, in the presence of an infinite number of angels, sit in the same throne with Christ; and shall, by the just sentence of God, be praised for a conqueror over the world, and the invisible powers of hell! What can it desire more, than to be partaker of all those Divine goods, and even to accompany Christ in the same throne? O how cheerfully do they bear all afflictions for Christ, who, with a lively faith and certain hope, apprehend so sublime honours!

If the applause of men, and the good opinion which they have from others, be esteemed an honour,

[d] Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. [e] Isa. xxvi. 4. [a] Apoc. iii.

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what shall be the applause of heaven, and the good opinion not only of saints and angels, but of God himself, whose judgment cannot err? David took it for a great honour, that the daughter of his king was judged a reward of his valour: God surpasses this, and honours so much the service of his elect, that he pays their merits with no less a reward than himself.

Besides this, he, who is most known, and is praised and celebrated for good and virtuous by the greatest multitude, is esteemed the most glorious and honourable person: but all this world is a solitude in respect of the citizens of heaven, where innumerable angels approve and praise the virtuous actions of the just: and they likewise are nothing; and all creatures, men, and angels, but as a solitary wilderness, in respect of the Creator. What man so glorious upon earth, whose worth and valour hath been known to all? Those who were born before him could not know him: but the just in heaven shall be known by all, past and to come, and by all the angels, and by the King of men and angels. Human fame is founded upon the applause of mortal men, who, besides being less than angels, may be deceived, may speak untruth, and are, most part of them, sinners and wicked; how far must that honour exceed it, which is conferred upon the just by the holy angels, and by those blessed and pure souls, who cannot be deceived themselves, nor will deceive others! If we esteem it more to be honoured by the kings of the earth, by the great men of the world, than by some ignorant peasants of some poor village; how ought we then to value the honour which shall be bestowed upon us by the saints in heaven, who are the kings and grandees of the court of God, and are all replenished with most perfect and Divine wisdom? All the honour of men is ridiculous; and his ambition no wiser who seeks it, than if one worm should desire to be honoured by another: all the earth is but as a village, or rather some small cottage, in respect of heaven; let us not, therefore, strive for a name upon earth, but that our names may be written in heaven.

If Saul thought the honour too much which was given to David by the damsels, when they celebrated his victory in their songs, what shall it be to be celebrated by all the angels and saints in celestial responsories? When a servant of God enters into heaven, he shall be received with such divine music, all the blessed in heaven often repeating those words in the gospel, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in a few things, thou shalt be placed over much; enter into thy Master's joy." Which words they shall repeat in quires: this shall be a song of victory and honour, above all the honours of the earth; being conferred by so great, so wise, so holy, and so authentic persons. Although the honour and applause, which the just receive in heaven, from the citizens of that holy city, be incomparable; yet that honour and respect, with which God himself shall treat them, is far above it; it is expressed in no meaner similitude than that of the honour done by the servant unto his Lord; and therefore it is said, that God himself shall, as it were, serve the blessed in heaven at their table. It is much amongst men to be seated at the table of a prince; but for a king to serve his vassal, as if he himself were his servant, who ever heard it?

David, when he caused Mephibosheth (although the grandchild of a king, and the son of an excellent prince, unto whom David owed his life) to sit at his table, he thought he did him a singular honour; but this favour never extended to wait on him. The honour which God bestows upon the just, exceeds all human imaginations; who, not satisfied with crowning all the blessed with his own Divinity, giving himself to be possessed and enjoyed by them for all eternity, does also honour their victories and heroic actions with new crowns.[b]

The just shall shine like the stars in the firmament; and if the least saint in heaven shall shine seven times more than the sun, what shall that light be, which shall outshine so many suns![c]

The honour of the just in heaven depends not, like that of the earth, upon accidents and reports, nor is exposed to dangers, or measured by the discourse of others; but in itself contains its own glory and dignity. The Romans erected statues unto those whom they intended to honour, because, being mortal, there should something remain after death, to make their persons and services, which they had done to the commonweal, known to posterity; but in heaven there is no need of this artifice, because those, which are there honoured, are immortal, and shall have in themselves some character engraved, as an evident and clear token of their noble victories and achievements: what greater honour than to be friends of God, sons, heirs, and kings in the realm of heaven?

St. John, in his Apocalypse, sets forth this honour of the blessed, in the twenty-four elders, who were placed about the throne of God;[d] and in that honour and majesty, as every one was seated in his presence, and that upon a throne, clothed in white garments, in sign of their perpetual joy, and crowned with a crown of gold, in respect of their dignities. To be covered in the presence of kings is the greatest honour they confer upon the chiefest grandees; but God causes his servants to be crowned and seated upon thrones before him; and our Saviour, in the day of judgment, makes his disciples his fellow-judges. Certainly, greater honour cannot be imagined, than that which the just receive in heaven; for if we look upon him, who honours, it is God; if with what, with no less joy than his own Divinity, and other most sublime gifts; if before whom, before the whole theatre of heaven; if the continuance, for all eternity: therefore, let us so dispose of our lives here, and live so righteously and holily, that we may be thought worthy of that crown of glory, which he hath prepared for all those who love and serve him.

[b] Apoc. xxi. [c] Apoc. i. 21. [d] Apoc. iv.

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CHAPTER III.

Of the Riches of the Eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

THE riches in heaven are no less then the honours; though those are, as hath been said, inestimable. There can be no greater riches than to want nothing which is good, nor to need any thing which can be desired; and in that blessed life no good shall fail, nor no desire be unsatisfied; if, as the philosophers say, he is not rich who possesseth much, but he who desires nothing; there being in heaven no desire unaccomplished, there must needs be great riches. It was a position of the Stoics, that he was not poor who wanted, but he who was necessitated: since, then, in the celestial kingdom there is necessity of nothing, most rich is he who enters into it. By reason of these divine riches, Christ, our Saviour, when he speaks in his parables of the kingdom of heaven, doth sometimes call it, "the hidden treasure, the precious pearls;" for if divine happiness consists in the eternal possession of God, what riches may be compared with his who enjoys him? and what inheritance to that of the kingdom of heaven? and what possession more precious than the Divinity? and what more to be desired than the Creator of all things precious, who gives himself for a possession and riches unto the saints, to the end they should abhor those riches which are temporal, if by them the eternal are endangered?

Besides the possession of God, the just shall reign with Christ eternally in the kingdom of heaven; whose riches must needs be immense, since they are to be kings of so great and ample a kingdom: if the earth, compared with heaven, be but a point, and yet contains so many kingdoms; what shall that be which is but one kingdom, and yet extended over the whole heavens? Some famous mathematicians say of the imperial heaven, that it is so great, that if God should allow unto every one of the blessed a greater space than the whole earth, yet there would remain as much more to give unto others; and that the capaciousness of this heaven is so great, that it contains more than ten thousand and fourteen millions of miles. What wonder will it be to see a city so great, of so precious matter! Divines confess the capaciousness of this heaven to be immense, but are more willing to admire it, than bold to measure it.[a] It is all composed of matter far more beautiful and precious than gold, pearl, and diamonds: the heavens which we discover, with the sun and all the other stars, are but the pavement of the eternal firmament; the inhabitants thereof tread under their feet the front of the brightest stars: the sun and moon were made to give light to this low elementary world; the heavenly Lamb is the lamp which doth lighten the eternal Sion, the mansion of glory; what shall that place be, where the saints in the light of glory see the uncreated and inaccessible light of the Deity!

It is called a kingdom, for its immense greatness; and a city, for its great beauty and population: it is full of inhabitants of all nations and conditions; where are many thousands of angels, an infinite number of the just, even as many as have died since Abel; and thither also shall repair all who are to die unto the end of the world, and after judgment shall there remain for ever, invested in their glorious bodies: neither shall this populous city be inhabited with mean and base people, but with citizens so noble, rich, and just, that all of them shall be most holy and wise kings: how happy shall it be to live with such persons! The queen of Sheba, only to see Solomon, came from the end of the earth: to behold a king issue out of his palace, all the people flock together: what shall it then be, not only to see, but to live and reign with many angels, and converse with so many eminent and holy men! If there should now descend from heaven one of the prophets or apostles, with what earnestness and admiration would every one strive to see and hear him: in the other world we shall hear and see them all: how admirable will it be to see thousands of thousands in all their beauty and greatness; and so many glorious bodies of saints in all their lustre! If one sun be sufficient to clear up the whole world here below, what joy shall it be, to behold those innumerable suns in that region of light!

This kingdom of God is not like other kingdoms, which contain huge deserts, inaccessible mountains, and thick woods; nor is it divided into many cities and villages, distant one from another; but this kingdom, although a most spacious region, is all one beautiful city: who would not wonder if all England were but one city, and that as beautiful as Rome in the time of Augustus Cæsar, who found it of brick, and left it of marble! What a sight were that of Syria, if all a Jerusalem! What shall then be the celestial city of saints, whose greatness possesses the whole heavens, and is, as the holy Scriptures describe, (to exaggerate the riches of the saints,) all of gold and precious stones! The gates of this city were, as St. John says, one entire pearl, and the foundation of the walls jasper, sapphire, calcedon, emerald, topaz, jacinth, amethyst, and other most precious stones; the streets of fine gold, so pure as it seemed crystal, joining in one substance the firmness of gold and transparency of crystal, and the beauty both of one and the other. If all England were of sapphire, how would it amaze the world! How marvellous then will the holy city be, which, though extended over so many millions of leagues, is all of gold, pearl, and precious stones; or, to say better, of a matter of far more value, and peopled with such a multitude of beautiful citizens, who are as far above any imaginable number, as the capacity of the city is above any imaginable measure!

Of those incomparable riches, the blessed are not only to be lords, but kings; neither is this celestial measure, or this kingdom of heaven, less or poorer by having so many lords and kings: it is not like the kingdoms on earth, which permit but one king at once; and if divided, become of less power and majesty; but is of such condition, that it is wholly possessed by all in general, and by each one in par-

[a] Jo. Gaiter in Peregrino.

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ticular; like the sun, which warms all and every one, and not one less because it warms many. The effects of riches are much greater and more noble in heaven, than they can be upon earth: wealth may serve us here to maintain our power, honours, and delights; but all the gold in the world cannot free us from weakness, infamy, or pain; it cannot make a calenture not to afflict us, or that the pains of the head or gout do not molest us, or that cares and fears shall not break our sleep: this only is to be had in heaven; where their power is so free from weakness, that one only angel, without army, guns, swords, or lance, could destroy at once one hundred and eighty thousand.[b]

Besides, it is to be considered, that the great riches of the saints are not like those of the kings of the earth, drawn from the tributes imposed upon their vassals, which, though just, yet are not free from this ill condition; that what enricheth the prince, impoverishes the subject: the riches in heaven have no such blemish, they are burdensome to none; and what is given unto the servants of Christ, who reign in heaven, is not taken from any.

If all the earth were of gold, and all the rivers of balsam, and all the rocks of precious stones, wouldst thou not say, that this is a great treasure? Know, that a treasure, which exceeds gold as far as gold doth dirt,—balsam, water,—or precious stones, pebbles,—remains as a reward for the just.

Wherefore we ought to lift up our souls, and alienate our affections from the frail felicity of these temporal goods of the earth, and say, with David, "Glorious things are said of thee, thou city of God; whatsoever pains and poverty we suffer here, we shall receive in glory so much the greater riches."

How poor and narrow a heart must that christian have, who confines his love to things present, sweating and toiling for a small part of the goods of this world, which itself is so little! Why doth he content himself with some patch of the earth, when he may be lord of the whole heavens? Let us not, therefore, who are to die to-morrow, afflict ourselves for that which may perish sooner than we: let us not toil to enjoy that which we are shortly to leave, but let us lay up our treasures in heaven, that kingdom of the blessed, where the riches, joys, and comforts are eternal, and can never be taken from us. I will, therefore, study to use this world with indifference, and shall not be puffed up when things succeed happily, nor dejected when they fall crossly, but shall bless God in all conditions; whether I abound or want, whether rich or poor, I will bless the Lord at all times; his praises shall be ever in my mouth: I shall never complain of the necessities of this life, since, though all things fail me, the means of my salvation will not fail me; for even that want may be a means to obtain it.

[b] Reg. iv. 19.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Greatness of Eternal Pleasures.

Honour, profit, and pleasures, are distinct goods upon earth, and are rarely found together; honour is seldom a companion of profit, or profit of pleasure; and so the sick man drinks his purge, because it is profitable, how bitter soever: the pleasures of the world are, for the most part, mixed with some shame, and oftentimes with infamy; they are costly and expensive, we cannot entertain our pleasures without diminishing our wealth; it is not so in eternal goods, in which to be honest is to be profitable, and to be profitable delectable; eternal honours are accompanied with immense riches, and they are both attended by pleasures without end. All this is signified by the Lord, when he received the faithful servant into glory, when he said, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in few things, I will place thee over many; enter into the joy of thy Lord:" first he honours him, commending him for a good and faithful servant; then enriches him, delivering many things into his hands; and so admits him into the joy and pleasure of his Lord; thereby signifying the greatness of this joy, not saying that this joy should enter into him, but that he should enter into joy, and into no other but that of his Lord: so great is the joy of that celestial Paradise, that it wholly fills and embraces the blessed souls, which enter into heaven, as into an immense sea of pleasure and delight. The joys of the earth enter into the hearts of those who possess them, but fill them not; because the capacity of man's heart is greater than they can satisfy; but the joys of heaven in the blessed enter into themselves, and fill and overflow them in all parts.

The multitude of joys in heaven is joined with their greatness; and so great they are, that the very least of them is sufficient to make us forget the greatest contents of the earth; and so many they are, as that though a thousand times shorter, yet they would exceed all temporal pleasures, though a thousand times longer; but joining the abundance of those eternal joys with their immense greatness, that eternal bliss becomes ineffable; so great are the joys of heaven, that all the arithmeticians of the earth cannot number them, the geometricians cannot measure them, nor the most learned in the world explicate them;[a] the just shall rejoice in what is above them, which is the vision of God; in what is below them, which is the beauty of heaven, and the blessed souls; in what is within them, which is the glorification of their bodies; in what is with them, which is the company of angels, and men made perfect: God shall feast all their senses with unspeakable delight, for he shall be their object; and shall be a mirror to the sight, music to the ear, sweetness to the taste, balsam to the smell, flowers to the touch; there shall be the clear light of summer, the pleasantness of the spring, the abundance of autumn, and the repose of winter.

[a] 1 Cor. ii. Isaiah lxiv.

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The principal joy of the blessed is in the possession of God, whom they behold clearly as he is in himself; for as honourable, profitable, and delectable, are not divided in heaven, so the blessed souls have three gifts, essential and inseparable from that happy state, which correspond to those three kinds of blessings, which the learned call vision, comprehension, and fruition: the first consists in the clear and distinct sight of God, which is given to the just, by which he receives an incomparable honour, since his works and virtues are rewarded in the presence of the angels with no less a crown and recompence than is God himself: the second is the possession which the soul hath of God, as of his riches and inheritance; the third is the ineffable joy which accompanies this sight and possession; which is so great, that neither the blessed themselves, who have experience of it, nor the angels in heaven, are able to declare it. This joy hath two singular qualities, by which we may, in some sort, conceive the immensity of it; the first, that it is so powerful that it excludes all evil, pains, and grief: this only is so great a good, that many of the philosophers held it for the chief felicity of man: but herein was their error, that they judged that to be good, itself, which was but an effect or consequence of it: for so powerful is that love and joy which springs from the clear vision of God, that it is sufficient to convert hell into glory; insomuch as, if to the most tormented soul in hell were added all the torments of the rest of the damned, both men and devils, and that God should vouchsafe him but one glimpse of his knowledge, that only clear vision, though in the lowest degree, were sufficient to free him from all those evils, both of sin and pain; there is no joy in this world so intense, which can suspend the grief we suffer from a finger that is sawing off; griefs do more easily bereave us of the sense of pleasures, than pleasures do of pains; yet such is the greatness of that sovereign joy in heaven, that it alone is sufficient to drown all the grief and torments, both in earth and hell: and there is no pain in the world able to diminish the least part of it.

All those joys of the blessed, both in soul and body, which are innumerable, have their source and original from that unspeakable joy of the clear vision of God.

And how can the joy be less which proceeds from such a cause, who gives himself to be possessed by man; that joy being the very same which God enjoys, and which suffices to make God himself blessed, with a blessedness equal to himself. Therefore, not without great mystery, it is said, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord." It is not said, simply, into joy; but to determine the greatness of it, it was his own joy, that joy by which he himself becomes happy.

We are to consider, that there is nothing in this world, which hath not for its end some manner of perfection. And that those things which are capable of reason and knowledge, have, in that perfection, a particular joy and complacency; which joy is greater or lesser, according as that end is more or less perfect. Since, therefore, the Divine perfection is infinitely greater than that of all the creatures, the joy of God, which is in himself, (for he hath no end or perfection distinct from himself,) is infinitely greater than that of all things besides: this joy, out of his infinite goodness, he hath been pleased to make the holy angels and blessed souls partakers of, communicating unto the just his own felicity. Therefore, the joy of saints, which is that of the beatifical vision, wherein consists the joy and happiness of God, must needs be infinite and ineffable; and all the happiness and contents of this world, in respect of it, are bitter as aloes or wormwood. By how much a delectable object is more nearly and straitly united to the faculty, by so much greater is the joy and delight which it produces: therefore God, who is the most excellent and delightful object, being, in the beatifical vision, united to the soul with the most intimate union that can be in a pure creature, must necessarily cause a most inexplicable joy, incomparably greater than all the joys, real or imaginable, which can be produced by the creatures now existent or possible. For as the Divine perfection encloseth within itself all the perfections of things created, possible and imaginable; so the joy, which it causeth in the souls of the blessed, must be infinitely greater than all other joys, which either have or can be caused by the creature. If there were in the world a man as wise as an angel, we should all desire to see him, as the queen of Sheba did Solomon; but if to this wisdom were joined the strength of Samson, the victories of Maccabeus, the affability of David, the friendliness of Jonathan, the liberality of the emperor Titus, and to all this, the beauty and comeliness of Absalom; who would not love, and desire to live and converse with this admirable person? Why, then, do we not love the sight of God, in whom all those perfections and graces are infinitely united, and which we ourselves, if we serve him, are to enjoy, as if they were our own?

O how great and delightful a theatre shall it be to see God as he is, with all his infinite perfections, and the perfections of all creatures, which are eminently contained in the Deity! How admirable were that spectacle, where were represented all that are, or have been, pleasant or admirable in the world! If one were placed where he might behold the seven wonders of the world, the sumptuous banquets made by Ahasuerus, the rare shows exhibited by the Romans, the wealth of Crœsus, the Assyrian and Roman monarchs, and all these jointly together, who would not be transported with joy and wonder at so admirable a sight? But more happy were he, upon whom all these were bestowed, together with a thousand years of life, wherein to enjoy them: yet all these were nothing, in respect of the beatifical vision of God, in whom those, and all the perfections, that either are, or have been, or possibly can be, are contained: whatever else is great and delightful in the world, together with all the pleasure and perfections, that all the men of the world have obtained, or shall obtain to the world's end; all the wisdom of Solomon, all the sciences of Plato and Aristotle, or all the strength of Aristomenes and Milo, all the beauty of Paris and Adonis; if they

should give all these to one person, it would have no comparison, and would seem a loathsome thing, being compared only to the delight which will be enjoyed in seeing God for all eternity; because in him will be seen a theatre of bliss and greatness, wherein is comprised, as in one, the greatness of all creatures. In him will be found all the riches of gold, the delightfulness of the meadows, the brightness of the sun, the pleasantness of music, the beauty of the heavens, the comfortable smell of amber, the contentedness of all the senses, and all that can be either admired or enjoyed.

To this may be added, that this inestimable joy of the vision of God is to be multiplied into innumerable other joys; into as many as there are blessed spirits and souls, which shall enjoy the sight of God; in regard every one is to have a particular contentment of the bliss of every one; and because the blessed spirits and souls are innumerable, the joys likewise of every one will be innumerable. For, as every saint shall love another equally as himself, so he shall receive equal joy from his happiness to that of his own: and if he shall rejoice in the happiness of those equal unto himself, how much shall he rejoice in the happiness of God, whom he loves better than himself?

Let us, therefore, rejoice, who are christians, unto whom so great blessings are promised; let us rejoice that heaven was made for us, and let this hope banish all sadness from our hearts; let those grieve and be melancholy, who have no hope of heaven, and not we, unto whom Christ hath promised the blessedness of his glory. Let this hope comfort us, this joy refresh us; and let us now begin to enjoy that here, which we are ever hereafter to possess; for hope is an anticipation of joy: upon this we ought to place all our thoughts, turning our eyes from all the goods and delights of the earth. From hence I will shut up the windows of my senses; the things of the earth seeming unto me unworthy to be looked upon after the contemplation of the heavenly, in the hope whereof I will only rejoice.

THE PRAYER.

O Father of light, grant me the light of thy glory; that one day I may clearly see that, which I now believe by the light of faith. O eternal Word, bestow thyself upon me, that I may possess in heaven that which I see by hope upon earth. O Holy Ghost, make me partaker of thine infinite beauty; to the end I may one day enjoy that, which I now embrace by charity. Lord, I am wholly thine, be thou wholly mine: thou art my salvation and hope; grant, Lord, that I may praise thee everlastingly. I desire nothing in heaven or earth, but thyself; for thou art the God of my heart, and the only part which I pretend unto in the eternity of eternities.

CHAPTER V.

The Excellency and Happiness of the Souls and Bodies of the Just, in the Life Eternal.

When the Hebrews would express a blessed person, they did not call him "blessed," in the singular; but "blessings," in the abstract and plural; and so, in the first Psalm, in place of "beatus," the Hebrews say, "beatitudes;" and, certainly, with much reason; since the blessed enjoy as many blessings as they have powers or senses; blessings in their understanding, will, and memory; blessings in their sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The understanding shall live there, with a clear and supreme wisdom: the will, with an inflamed love; the memory, with an eternal representation of the good which is past; the senses, with a continual delectation in their objects. Finally; all that is man, shall live in a perpetual joy, comfort, and blessedness.

And to begin with the life and joy of the understanding: the blessed, besides that supreme and clear knowledge of the Creator, shall know the Divine mysteries, the secrets of Providence, the frame and making of the world, the whole artifice of nature, the motions of the stars, the properties of the planets, and of all created entities; all which they shall not only know jointly and in mass, but clearly and distinctly, without confusion. This shall be the life of the understanding, which shall feast itself with so high and certain truths. The knowledge of the greatest wise men and philosophers of the world, even in things natural, is full of ignorance and deceit; because they know not the substance of things, but through the shell of accidents: so as the most simple peasant, arriving at the height of glory, shall be replenished with a knowledge, in respect of which the wisdom of Solomon and Aristotle were but ignorance and barbarism.

What content were it to behold all the wise men of the world, and the principal inventors and masters of sciences and faculties, met together in one room; Adam, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Zoroaster, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Homer, Trismegistus, Solon, Lycurgus, Hippocrates, Euclid, Archimedes, and all the doctors of the church! How venerable were this junto! How admirable this assembly! And what journeys would men make to behold them! If, then, to see such imperfect scraps of knowledge, divided amongst so many men, would cause so great admiration; what shall be the joy of the blessed, when each particular person shall see his own understanding furnished with that true and perfect wisdom, whereof all theirs is but a shadow? Who can express the joy they shall receive by the knowledge of so many truths? What contentment would it be to one, if at once they should show unto him whatever there is, and what is done in the whole earth; The fair buildings; the fruit-trees, of so great diversity; all living creatures, of so great variety; all the birds, the fishes, the metals so rich; all people and nations,

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farthest remote? Certainly, it would be a sight of wonderful satisfaction. But what will it be to see all this; whatsoever there is in the earth, together with all that there is in heaven and above heaven? Some philosophers, in the discovery of a natural truth, or the invention of some rare curiosity, have been transported with a greater joy and content, than their senses were capable of. For this, Aristotle spent so many sleepless nights; for this, Pythagoras travelled into so many strange nations; for this, Crates deprived himself of all his wealth; and Archimedes never removed his thoughts, night nor day, from the inquisition of some mathematical demonstration. He spent many days in finding out, by his mathematical riches, how much gold would serve to gild a crown of silver; and having found it, he fetched divers skips, and cried out, "I have found it, I have found it!" If, then, the finding out of so mean a truth could so transport this great artist; what joy shall the saints receive, when God shall discover unto them those high secrets, and above all, that sublime mystery of the trinity of persons in the unity of essence? The blessed shall receive more knowledge in one instant, than the wise of the world have obtained, with all their watchings, travels, and experiences. Aristotle, for the great love he bore to knowledge, held, that the chief felicity of man consisted in contemplation. If he found so great joy in natural speculation, what shall we find in Divine, and the clear vision of God? As the understanding shall be applied to the prime truth, which is God himself; so shall the beatified will be inseparably joined to the essence of the Divine goodness. There shall the memory also live, representing unto us the Divine benefits, and rendering eternal thanks unto the Author of all. The soul, rejoicing in its own happiness, to have received so great mercies for so small merits; and, remembering the dangers from which it hath been freed by Divine favour, it shall sing that verse in the Psalm: "The snare is broken, and we are delivered." The remembrance of the acts of virtue and good works shall be a particular joy unto the blessed; both in respect they were a means of our happiness, as also of pleasing so gracious and good a Lord.

In heaven, we shall not only joy in the memory of those things wherein we have pleased God, in complying with his holy will, and in ordering and disposing our life in his service; but in the troubles, also, and dangers we have past. The memory of death is bitter to those who are to die; but unto the just, who have already passed it, and are secure in heaven, nothing can be more pleasant, who now, to their unspeakable joy, know themselves to be free from death, infirmity, and danger.

There, also, shall live the will, rejoicing to see all its desires accomplished, with the abundance and sweet society of so many felicities; being necessitated to love so admirable a beauty, as the soul enjoys and possesses in God Almighty. Love makes all things sweet; and, as it is a torment to be separated from what one loves, so it is a great joy and felicity to remain with the beloved: and, therefore, the blessed, loving God more than themselves, how unspeakable a comfort must it be to enjoy God, and the society of those whom they so much affect! The love of the mother makes her delight more in the sight of her own son, though foul and of worse conditions than that of his neighbours. The love, then, of the saints, one towards another, being greater than that of mothers to their children; and every one of them being so perfect and worthy to be beloved; and every one enjoying the sight of the same God; how comfortable must be their conversation! Seneca said, that the possession of what good soever, was not pleasing without a partner: the possession, then, of the chief good, must be much more delightful with the society of such excellent companions. If a man were to remain alone for many years in some beautiful palace, it would not please him so well as a desert with company; but the city of God is full of most noble citizens, who are all sharers of the same blessedness. This conversation, also, being with wise and holy personages, shall much increase their joy; for if one of the greatest troubles of human life be, to suffer the ill conditions, follies, and impertinences of rude and ill-bred people; and the greatest content, to converse with sweet, pious, and learned friends; what shall that Divine conversation be in heaven, where there is none ill-conditioned, none impious, none froward, but at peace, piety, love, and sweetness? Every one shall then rejoice as much in the felicity of another, as in his own ineffable joy; and shall possess as many joys as he shall find companions. There are all things which are necessary or delightful, all riches, ease, and comfort. Where God is, nothing is wanting; all there know God without error, behold him without end, praise him without weariness, love him without tediousness, and in this love repose themselves in God. Besides all this, the security which the will shall have, in the eternal possession of this felicity, is an unspeakable joy. The fear, that the good things which we enjoy are to end, or at least may end, mingles wormwood with our joys; and pleasures do not relish where there is danger: but this celestial happiness being eternal, neither shall nor can end, diminish, or be endangered; but, with this security, adds a new joy unto those others of the saints.

Besides the powers of the soul, the senses also shall live, nourished with the food of most proportionable and delightful objects; the eyes shall ever be recreated with the light of the most glorious and beautiful bodies of the saints: one sun suffices to cheer up the whole world; what joy, then, shall one of the blessed conceive, in beholding as many suns as there are saints, and in seeing himself one of them!

But, above all, with what content and admiration shall we behold the glorious body of Christ, our Redeemer; in comparison of whose splendour, that of all the saints shall be as darkness; from whose wounds shall issue forth rays of a particular brightness! Besides all this, the glory and greatness of the empyreal heaven, and the lustre of that celestial city, shall infinitely delight the blessed citizens: the ears shall be filled with most harmonious music, as

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may be gathered from many places of the Scripture. If the harp of David delighted Saul so much, as it assuaged the fury of his passions, cast forth devils, and freed him of that melancholy, whereof the wicked spirit made use; and that the lyre of Orpheus wrought such wonders, both with men and beasts; what shall the harmony of heaven do? What delight then will it be, not only to hear the voice of one instrument played upon by an angel, but all the voices of thousands of angels, together with the admirable melody of musical instruments! What sweetness will it be, to hear so many heavenly musicians, those millions of angels, which will be sounding forth their hallelujahs unto the great God of heaven and earth! O how I desire to be freed from this body, that I might hear and enjoy it! Happy were I, and for ever happy, if, after death, I might hear the melody of those hymns and hallelujahs, which the citizens of that celestial habitation, and the squadrons of those blessed spirits, sing in praise of the eternal King. This is that sweet music which St. John heard in the Apocalypse, when the inhabitants of heaven sang, "Let all the world bless thee, O Lord! to thee be given all honour and dominion, for a world of worlds. Amen."

The smell shall be feasted with the odour, which issues from those beautiful bodies, more sweet than music or amber; and from the whole heaven, more fragrant than jessamines or roses.

The taste, also, in that blessed country, shall not want the delight of its proper object; for although the saints shall not there feed, which were to necessitate that happy state unto something besides itself; yet they shall have the delight of meat, without the trouble of eating, by reason of the great delicacy of this celestial taste. The glory of the saints is often signified in holy Scripture, under the names of a supper, banquet, manna. It cannot be expressed, how great shall be the delight and sweetness of taste, which eternally shall be found in heaven. If Esau sold his birth-right for a dish of lentil-pottage, well may we mortify our taste here upon earth, that we may enjoy that perfect and incomparable one in heaven.

The touch, also, shall there receive a most delightful entertainment; all they tread upon, shall seem unto the just to be flowers; and the whole dispositions of their bodies shall be ordered with a most exquisite temperature: for as the torments of the damned in hell are most expressed in that sense, so the bodies of the blessed in heaven shall, in that sense, receive a special joy and refreshment. And as the heat of that infernal fire, without light, is to penetrate even to the entrails of those miserable persons: so the brightness of the celestial light is to penetrate the bodies of the blessed, and fill them with an incomparable delight and sweetness; all and every part of the body, in general and particular, shall be sensible of a most admirable pleasure and content.

The humanity of Christ, our Redeemer, is to be the chief and principal joy of all the senses; and, therefore, as the intellectual knowledge of the divinity of Christ, is the joy and essential reward of the soul; so the sensitive knowledge of the humanity of Christ, is the chief and essential joy of the senses, and the utmost end and felicity whereunto they can aspire. This, it seems, was meant by our Saviour, in St. John; where, speaking unto the Father, he said, "This is life eternal," that is, essential blessedness, "that they know thee, the only true God," (in which is included the essential glory of the soul,) "and Him, whom thou hast sent," Jesus Christ; in which is included the essential blessedness of the senses.

It is also much to be observed, that the blessed souls shall be crowned with some particular joys, which the very angels are not capable of; for they only shall receive the crown of martyrdom, since no angel can have the glory to have shed his blood, and died for Christ; neither to have overcome the flesh, and by combats and wrestlings subjected it unto reason. Men shall have the glory of their bodies, and joy of their senses, which the angels cannot; for, as they want the one joy of the Spirit, which is the flesh, so they must want the glory of the victory. Neither shall they have this great joy of mankind, in being redeemed by Christ from sin, and from as many damnations into hell as they have committed sins; and to see themselves now freed and secure from that horrid evil, and so many enemies of the soul, which they had, which must needs produce a most unspeakable joy.

The souls of the blessed shall not only be glorious, but their very bodies shall be filled with glory, and invested with a light seven times brighter than that of the sun; for, although it be said in the gospel, "That the just shall shine as the sun;" yet Isaiah, the prophet, says, "That the sun, in those days, shall shine seven times more than it now doth." This light being the most beautiful and excellent of corporeal qualities, shall clothe the just, as with a garment of most exceeding lustre and glory. What emperor was ever clad in such a purple? What human majesty ever cast forth beams of such splendour?

Herod, upon the day of his greatest magnificence, could only clothe himself in a robe of silver, admirably wrought, which did not shine of itself, but by reflection of the sunbeams, which then, in his rising, cast his rays upon it; and yet this little glittering was sufficient to make the people to salute him as a god. What admiration shall it then cause, to behold the glorious body of a saint, not clothed in gold and purple, not adorned with diamonds or rubies, but more resplendent than the sun itself! Put all the brightest diamonds together, all the fairest rubies, all the most beautiful carbuncles; let an imperial robe be embroidered with them all; all this will be no more than as coals, in respect of a glorious body, which shall be all transparent, bright, and resplendent, far more than if it were set with diamonds. The garments which we wear here, how rich soever, are rather an affront and disgrace unto us, than an ornament; since they argue an imperfection, and a necessity of our bodies, which we are forced to supply with something of another nature. Besides, our clothes were given as a mark of Adam's fall in Paradise, and we wear them as a

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penance enjoined for his sin. What fool is so sottish, as to bestow precious trimming upon a penitential garment?

But such are not the ornaments of the saints in heaven; their lustre is their own, not borrowed from their garments, but within themselves; each part of them being more transparent than crystal, and brighter than the sun. It is recounted in the Apocalypse, as a great wonder, "That a woman was seen clothed with the sun, and crowned with twelve stars." This, indeed, was far more glorious than any ornament upon earth; yet this is short of the ornament of the saints, whose lustre is proper to themselves, intrinsically their own, not taken and borrowed from something without them, as was that of the woman's. The state and majesty with which this gift of splendour shall adorn the saints, shall be incomparably greater than that of the mightiest kings. It were a great majesty in a prince, when he issues forth of his palace by night, to be attended by a thousand pages, each having a lighted torch; but were those torches stars, it were nothing to the state and glory of a saint in heaven, who carries with him a light equal to that of the sun seven times doubled; and what greater glory, than not to need the sun, which the whole world needs? Where the just is, there shall be no night; for wheresoever he goes, he carries the day along with him. St. Paul, beholding the gift of clarity in the humanity of Christ, remained for some days without sense or motion. St. John, only beholding it in the face of our Saviour, fell down as if dead; his mortal eyes being not able to endure the lustre of so great a majesty. St. Peter, because he saw something of it in the transfiguration of Christ, was so transported with the glory of the place, that he had a desire to have continued there for ever. What sight more glorious, than to behold so many saints, like so many suns, to shine with so incomparable lustre and beauty?

What light, then, will that of heaven be, proceeding from so many lights; or, to speak more properly, from so many suns? How great, then, shall the clarity of that holy city be, where many suns do inhabit! And if, by the sight of every one in particular, their joy shall be more augmented, by the sight of a number without number, what measure can that joy have which results from so beautiful a spectacle?

The bodies of the saints, endowed with this light, which they receive from the gift of clarity, are impassible, and cannot suffer from any thing. They have an agility to move from place to place with speed and subtilty, like light; to have their way free and pervious through all places, and can penetrate wheresoever they please.

By this gift of impassibility their bodies are freed from all miseries, which our bodies now suffer; the cold of winter, the heat of summer, infirmities, griefs, tears, and the necessity of eating, which one necessity includes many others: let us but consider what cares and troubles men undergo only to sustain their lives: the labourer spends his days in ploughing, sowing, and reaping; the shepherd suffers cold and heat in watching of his flock: what dangers are past in all estates, only to be sure to eat! from all which the gift of impassibility exempts the just. The care of clothing troubles us also little less than that of feeding, and that of preserving the health much more; for as our necessities are doubly increased by sickness, so are our cares; from all which he, who is impassible, is free; and not only from the griefs and pain of this life, but, if he should enter into hell, it would not burn one hair of him. The gift of agility is most great, which easily appears by the troubles and inconveniences of a long journey, which, howsoever we are accommodated, is not performed without much weariness, and oftentimes with danger, both of health and life: a king, though he pass in a coach or litter, after the most easy and commodious way of travelling, must pass over rocks, hills, and rivers, and spend much time; but with the gift of agility, the glorious bodies of the saints, in the twinkling of an eye, can traverse all the heavens, visit the earth, return unto the sun and firmament, and observe what is above the stars, in the empyreal heaven. To this noble gift of agility shall be annexed that of subtilty, by which their glorious bodies shall have their way free and pervious through all places; no impediment shall obstruct their motion; there shall be no enclosure or prison to them; they shall with greater ease pass through the middle of a rock, than an arrow through the air: Christ showed the subtilty of his glorious body, while he issued out of his tomb, not opening it; and entered into the hall where the apostles were, the gates being shut.

Finally, the servants of Christ shall be there so replenished with all goods, both of soul and body, that there shall be nothing more for them to desire. What wouldst thou then, my body? what is it thou desirest, my soul? in heaven you shall find all you desire: if you are pleased with beauty, there the just shine as the sun; if you are pleased with any delight, there is not only one, but a sea of pleasure, which God keeps in store for the blessed, wherewith it shall quench their thirst. I will then, from henceforth, raise my desires unto that place, where only they can be accomplished; I will not be ambitious after things of the earth, which cannot satisfy me, but I will look after those in heaven, which are only great, only eternal, and can only fill the capacity of my heart.

What an advantageous bargain would it be, if one could buy a kingdom for a straw? Yet so it is; for that which is no more than a straw, we may purchase the kingdom of heaven: certainly all the felicity, riches, and earthly delights are no more than a straw, compared with the glory of heaven. How foolish would he be, who, having a basket-full of chips, would not give one of them for an hundredweight of gold! This is the vanity of man, who, for earthly goods, will not receive those of heaven.

If men undergo and suffer such hazards for a kingdom, which is momentary, and that not for themselves, but for another; what ought we to do for those eternal riches, which are to be our own, and for the kingdom of heaven, wherein we expect

such immense honours, riches, and pleasures? Let us take courage; it is the kingdom of heaven we hope for; joys, riches, and honours eternal, are those which are promised us: what pity is it, that for some short pleasure, we should lose joys so great and eternal! because we will not bear some slight injury here, should be deprived of celestial honour there! for not restoring what we have unjustly taken, should forfeit the divine riches of heaven! That which the world offers in her best pleasures, is but shells, offals, and parings; but that whereunto God invites, is a full table; for which reason it is called, in Scripture, the great supper, not a dinner; because, after dinner, we use to rise and go about other occasions and employments; but after supper there are no more labours, all is rest and repose: the principal dish, which is served in at this great supper, is the clear vision of God, and all his divine perfections; after that, a thousand joys of the soul, in all its powers and faculties; then a thousand pleasures of the senses, with all the endowments of a glorified body: those latter are, as it were, the dessert of this Divine banquet; and if the dessert be such, what shall be the substance of the feast?

THE PRAYER.

My Lord, my God, when shall I see the day, the happy day, in which I shall come and appear in thy heavenly mansion, to eat and drink with thee in thy kingdom, and to sit at thy table; there to behold the majesty of thy glory, which is the only object of my eternal bliss! O thou resplendent Star of the East, let thy eternal light shine in the horizon of my soul, then all these thick vapours of terrene affections will be dispersed. Lord, I have placed all my hopes in eternity; I find no more rest here, in these short moments, than the dove of the deluge did upon the waters. O God, thou art my eternal felicity; to thee be glory, honour, and thanksgiving, for ever, for evermore. Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

Considerations of Eternal Evils, and of the miserable State of the Damned.

The evils of hell are truly evils, and so purely such, that they have no mixture of good; in that place of unhappiness, all is eternal sorrow and complaint; there is no room for comfort, there shall not be the least good which may give ease; nor shall there want a concourse of all evils which may add affliction: no good is to be found there, where all goods are wanting: neither can there be want of any evil, where all evils whatsoever are to be found; and by the want of all good, and the collection of all evils, every evil is augmented. In the creation of the world, God gave a praise to every nature, saying, "It was good:" but when all were created and joined together, he said, "they were very good;" because the conjunction of many goods, advances the good of each particular; and in the same manner, the conjunction of many evils makes them all worse: what shall heaven then be, where there is a concourse of all goods, and no evils? and what hell, where there are all evils, and no good? Certainly the one must be exceeding good, and the other exceeding evil. In hell there is the pain of loss, and that so rigorous, that, in depriving the damned soul of one only thing, they take from him all good things; for they deprive him of God, in whom they are all comprised: he who is condemned, by human laws, to the loss of his goods, may, if he live, gain others, at least in another kingdom, if he fly thither; but he who is deprived of God, where shall he find another God? and who can fly from hell? God is the greatest good, and it is, therefore, the greatest evil to be deprived of him, because evil is the privation of good; and that is to be esteemed the greatest evil, which is a privation of the greatest good, which is God; and must certainly, therefore, cause more grief and resentment in the damned, than all the punishments and torments of hell besides: and in regard there is in hell an eternal privation of God, who is the chief good; the pains of loss, whereby one is deprived for ever of the greatest of all goods, this privation will cause the greatest pain and torment. If the burning of a hand cause an insufferable pain, if a bone displaced or out of joint causeth intolerable grief; how shall he be tormented, and what pains shall he suffer, who is eternally separated from God, who is the chief end for which man was created? I dare confidently say, the loss of heaven, and the omission of glory, is far more bitter than all those pains which are to be suffered in hell: and this is such a loss that the sinner shall be deprived even of the hope of what is good, and shall be left for ever in that profound poverty and necessity, without expectation of remedy or relief; and what greater want can any one have, than to want all things, and even hope of obtaining any thing? We are amazed at the poverty of holy Job, who, from a prince and a rich man, came to lie upon a dunghill, having nothing left but a piece of a broken pot to scrape away the putrefaction from his sores; but even this shall fail the damned, who would take it for a great regale, to have a dunghill for their bed, instead of the burning coals of that eternal fire. The rich glutton in the gospel, accustomed to drink in cups of crystal, to eat in silver, and to be clothed in silks and curious linen, can tell us how far this infernal poverty extends, when he demanded, not wines of Cadiz, but a little cold water, and that not in cups of gold or crystal, but upon the finger's end of a leper: this rich glutton came to such an extremity, that he would esteem it a great felicity that they would give him one drop of water, although it was from the filthy and loathsome finger of a leper; and yet this was also wanting to him. Let the rich of the world see to what poverty they are like to come; if they trust in their riches, let them know

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they shall be condemned to the loss of all which is good; let them reflect upon him who was accustomed to be clothed in precious garments, to tread upon carpets, to sleep upon down, to dwell in spacious palaces, now naked, thrown upon burning coals, and packed up in some narrow corner of that infernal dungeon.

And this poverty, or want of all good, of the damned, is accompanied with a most opprobrious infamy and dishonour, when, by public sentence, they shall be deprived, for their enormous offences, of eternal glory, and reprehended in the presence of saints and angels by the Lord of heaven and earth. A most intolerable thing is hell, and most horrible are the torments; yet if one should place a thousand hells before me, nothing could be so horrible unto me, as to be excluded from the honour of glory, to be hated of Christ, and to hear from him these words, "I know you not."

This infamy we may, in some sort, declare, under the example of a mighty king, who having no heir to succeed him in his kingdom, took up a beautiful boy at the church-door, and nourished him as his son, and, in his testament, commanded, that if at ripe years his conditions were virtuous and suitable to his calling, he should be received as lawful king, and seated in his royal throne; but if he proved vicious and unfit for government, they should punish him with infamy, and send him to the galleys: the kingdom obeyed this command, provided him excellent tutors; but he became so untoward and ill inclined, that he would learn nothing, flung away his books, spent his time amongst other boys, in making houses of dirt, and other fooleries; for which his governors chastised him, and advised him of what was fitting, and most imported him; but all did no good, only when they reprehended him, he would weep; not because he repented, but because they hindered his sport; and the next day did the same. The more he grew in age, the worse he became; and although they informed him of the king's testament, and what behoved him, all was to no purpose; until at last, all, being weary of his ill conditions, declared him unworthy to reign, despoiled him of his royal ornaments, and condemned him, with infamy, unto the galleys. What greater ignominy can there be than this, to lose a kingdom, and to be made a galley-slave?

More ignominious, and a more lamentable tragedy, is that of a christian condemned to hell; who was taken by God from the gates of death, adopted his son, with condition, that if he kept his commandments he should reign in heaven, and if not, he should be condemned to hell: but he, forgetting those obligations, without respect of his tutors or masters, who exhorted him, both by their doctrine and example, what was fitting for a child of God; yet he, neither moved by their advice, nor the chastisements of heaven, by which God overthrew his vain intentions, and thwarted his unlawful pleasures, only lamented his temporal losses, and not his offences; and, at the time of his death, was sentenced to be deprived of the kingdom of heaven, and precipitated into hell: what infamy can be greater than this of the damned soul?

If it be a great infamy to suffer death by human justice, for some crimes committed, how great an infamy will it be to be condemned by Divine justice, for a traitor and perfidious rebel to God! Besides this bitterness of pains, the damned persons shall be eternally branded with the infamy of their offences! so that they shall be scorned and scoffed at by the devils themselves; men and angels shall detest them, as infamous and wicked traitors to their King, God, and Redeemer; and as fugitive slaves are marked and cauterized with burning irons, so this infamy, by some mark of ugliness and deformity, shall be stamped upon their faces and bodies.[a] So ignominious shall be the body of a sinner, that when his soul returns to enter it, it shall be amazed to behold it so terrible, and shall wish it were rather in the same state as when it was half eaten up with worms.

And that which adds misery to their calamity, they shall be banished from heaven, and made prisoners in the profound bowels of the earth, a place most remote from heaven, and the most calamitous of all others; where they shall neither see the sun by day, nor the stars by night; where all shall be horror and darkness,[b] a land covered with the obscurity of death, a land of sulphur and burning pitch,[c] a land of pestilence and corruption: into this land of punishment and torments shall be banished the enemies of God.

What a grief will it be to see themselves deprived of the palaces of heaven, the society of saints, and that happy country of the living, where all is peace, charity, and joy; where all shines, all pleases, and all parts resound with hallelujahs! If the damned had no other punishment, than to see themselves banished amongst devils, into a place not far distant from heaven, sad as night without the sight or comfort of sun or moon for all eternity, it were a torment unsufferable.

It was a great tyranny in Alexander, after he had cut off the nose, ears, and lips of Callisthenes, to cast so worthy a person into a dungeon, only accompanied with a dog;[d] a spectacle indeed lamentable, to see so discreet a man used like a brute, and not have the company of one who might comfort him: but the damned would take it for a favour to have the company of dogs or lions, rather than that of their own parents.

The tyrants of Japonia invented a strange torment for those who confessed Christ; they hung them with their heads downwards, half their bodies into a hole digged in the earth, which they filled with snakes, lizards, and other poisonous vermin; but even those were better companions, than those infernal dragons of the pit of hell, whereunto not half, but the whole body of the miserable sinner shall be plunged. The Romans, when they punished any as a parricide, to express the heinousness of the fact, shut him up in a sack with a serpent, an ape, and a cock: what a horror shall it be in hell, when

[a] Isaiah xiii. [b] Job x. [c] Isa. xxxiv. [d] Senec. Suidas.

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a damned person shall be shut up with so many millions of devils! Here none will live near a pesthouse, or ill neighbour: think upon what neighbours there are in hell. Cato counselled those who were to take a farm, to have a special care what neighbours it had. Themistocles, being to sell a certain manor, caused the crier to proclaim, that he had good neighbours. How comes one then to purchase hell at so dear a rate as the price of his soul, having such cursed neighbours, where all will abhor him? Their disquietness and ranting will be insufferable; and the very sight and ugliness of them will affright and astonish him.

How grievous is the banishment into that place, where none wishes well unto another! where the fathers hate their sons, and the sons abhor their fathers; where the son shall say unto the father, "Cursed be thou, father, for all eternity; because, by an unjust inheritance, thou hast been the cause of my damnation:" and the father shall answer him, "Cursed be thou, son; for, to the end I might leave thee a rich inheritance, I stuck not to gain it by unjust means."

In other banishments, when parents or friends meet in a country far from home, they endeavour to comfort one another, and even enemies are then reconciled; but in this banishment of hell, friends abhor friends, and parents hate and are hated by their children.

To this may be added, that, in this banishment of the damned, the exiles are not allowed the liberty of other banished persons, who, within the isle or region of relegation, may go or move whither they please; but not so the damned in hell, because the place of their exile is also a prison, a horrid and stinking prison, wherein many millions of souls shall for ever lie fettered in chains; for chains, or something answerable unto them, shall not there be wanting. Whereupon it is observed by the learned, that the wicked spirits shall be fastened to fire, or certain fiery bodies, from which the pains which they shall receive shall be incredible: being thereby deprived of their natural liberty, as it were fettered with manacles and bolts, so as they are not able to remove from that place of misery.[e] It were a great torment to have burning irons cast upon our hands and feet; but this, and much more, shall be in hell, where those fiery bodies, which are to serve instead of shackles and fetters, are to be of terrible forms, proportionable unto their offences, and shall, with their very sight, affright them.

Besides, the bodies of the damned, after the final judgment past, shall be so straitened and crowded together in that infernal dungeon, that the holy Scripture compares them to grapes in the wine-press, which press one another till they burst. Most barbarous was that torment inflicted upon some unfortunate persons: they put certain rings of iron, stuck full of sharp points of needles, about their arms and feet, in such manner, as they could not move without pricking and wounding themselves; then they compassed them about with fire, to the end that standing still they might be burnt alive; and if they stirred the sharp points pierced their flesh with more intolerable pains than the fire. What shall then be the torment of the damned, where they shall burn eternally without dying, and without possibility of removing from the place designed them; where whatsoever they touch, shall be fire and sulphur, into which their bodies at the latter day shall be plunged? Neither shall unsavoury smells, so proper unto prisons, be wanting in that infernal dungeon: for, first, that fire of sulphur, being pent in without vent or respiration, shall send forth a poisonous scent; and if a match of brimstone be offensive here, what shall such a mass of that stuff be in hell? Secondly, the bodies of the damned shall cast forth a most horrible stink of themselves, and that more or less, according to the quality of their sins.

Actiolinus the tyrant (as Paulus Jovius writes) had many prisons, full of torments, miseries, and ill smells; insomuch as men took it for a happiness rather to die than to be imprisoned, because being loaded with irons, afflicted with hunger, and poisoned with the pestilential smell of those who died in prison, and were not suffered to be removed, they came to the end in a slow, but most cruel death. But what were those prisons to that of hell, in respect of which they may be esteemed as paradise, full of jessamine and lilies?

Whatsoever misery was suffered in Actiolinus's prison, was in this regard tolerable, because it was of no long continuance, being to last no longer than a short life, and quite vanishing away at the hour of death: but this prison of the damned is void of all comfort; the torments thereof are intolerable, because they are eternal. Death cannot enter in there, neither can those that are entered get out again; but they shall be tormented for evermore, for evermore! What a fearful thing is this! They shall be tormented for evermore!

If one were cast into some deep dungeon, without clothes, exposed to the inclemency of the cold and moisture of the place, where he should not see the light of heaven; should have nothing to feed on, but once a day some little piece of hard barley-bread; and that he were to continue there six years without speaking or seeing of any body; and not to sleep on other bed but the cold ground; what a misery were this! One week of that habitation would appear longer than a hundred years. Yet compare this with what shall be in the banishment and prison of hell, and you shall find the miserable life of that man to be a happiness; there, in all his troubles, he should not meet with any to scoff at his misfortune, none to torment, and whip him; but in hell he shall find both; the devils shall not cease to deride, whip, and cruelly torment him: there should be no horrid sights, no fearful noises of howlings, groanings, and lamentations; in hell the eyes and ears of the damned shall never be free from such affrights: there should be no flames of fire to scorch him; in hell they shall burn into his bowels: there he might move and walk; in hell, not stir a foot: there he may breathe the air with-

[e] August. de Civitat. Dei, lib. i. c. 10. Less. de Perfect. Divin. lib. xviii. c. 30.

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out stink; in hell he shall suck in nothing but flames, stink, and sulphur: there he might hope for coming forth; in hell there is no redemption: there that little piece of hard bread would seem every day a dainty; but in hell, in millions of years, his eyes shall not behold a crumb of bread, nor a drop of water, but shall eternally rage with hunger and a burning thirst: this is to be the calamity of that land of darkness.

THE PRAYER.

O Divine Eternity, O Eternal Divinity, who hast in thy hands the extremities of the earth, and who keepest the keys of eternal life and death; I am in thy hands, as clay in the hands of the potter; dispose of me as thou pleasest; I love thee entirely; I cannot love thee more, if I had the whole universe to boot; for all that which is out of thee, my God, and is not God, is as nothing to me. I love not Paradise itself, but because thou, my God, art there beloved; I know not how to love the Paradise of God, but only the God of Paradise: and I put no less rate upon the Calvary, where my Saviour was crucified, than the heaven where he is glorified. O my God, thou art he whom I seek for, to thee only it is that I aspire; yet henceforth I will not so much love the eternity of God, as the God of eternity, though it be the same eternity, and that same eternity be God himself: to whom be glory, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Slavery and Pains Eternal.

THE slavery of the damned in hell is such, that all their senses, and powers of the soul and body, are subject unto eternal pains and torments; with their touch, they are to serve that burning and never-consuming fire; with their taste, hunger and thirst; with their smell, stink; with their sight, those horrid and monstrous shapes which the devils shall assume; with their hearing, scorns and affronts; with their imagination, horror; with their will, loathsomeness and detestation; with their memory, despair; with their understanding, confusion; with such a multitude of other punishments, as they shall want eyes to weep for them.

Ælian writes of Trizus the tyrant, that he commanded his subjects not to speak together; and when they used signs instead of words, he also forbade those; whereupon the afflicted people met in the market-place at least to weep for their misfortunes, but neither was that permitted: greater shall be the rigour in hell, where they shall neither be suffered to speak a word of comfort, nor move hand or foot, nor ease their hearts with weeping. Jeremias the prophet lamented with floods of tears, that Jerusalem, which was the queen of nations, should be made a slave and tributary; what tears are sufficient to lament the damnation of a poor soul, who, from an heir and prince of the kingdom of heaven, hath made himself a slave to the devil, and those eternal punishments in hell, unto which he is to pay as many tributes as he hath senses, powers, and members.

As the slaves of the earth are whipped and punished by their masters, so the slaves of hell are tormented by the devils, who have power and dominion over them: children, as slaves, are whipped and chastised by their masters; so the tormentors, making the damned as their slaves, lay upon them a thousand afflictions, griefs, and miseries: every member of their body shall suffer greater pain and torment, than if it were torn from the body. If one cannot tell how to suffer a toothach, headach, or the pain of the colic, what will it be when there shall not be any joint, or the least part of the body, which shall not cause him an intolerable pain? Not only the head, or teeth, but also the breasts, sides, shoulders, the back, the heart, and all the parts of the body, even to the very bones and marrow. Who can express the number and greatness of their torments, since all their powers and senses, soul and body, are to suffer in a most violent manner? Besides this, every sense from his particular object shall receive a particular punishment.

The eyes shall not only be grieved with a scorching heat, but shall be tormented with monstrous and horrible figures: many are affrighted very much, passing through a church-yard, only for fear of seeing a fantasm; in what a fright will be a miserable damned soul, which shall see so many, and of so horrid shapes! Their sight also shall be tormented with beholding the punishment of their friends and kindred. Hegesippus writes, that Alexander, the son of Hyrcanus, resolving to punish certain persons with exemplary rigour, caused eight hundred to be crucified; and whilst they were yet alive, caused their wives and children to be murdered before their eyes; that so they might die not once, but many deaths. This rigour shall not be wanting in hell, where fathers shall see their sons, and brothers their brothers, tormented. The torment of the eyes shall be also very great, in regard that those which have given others scandal, and made others fall into sin, shall see themselves, and those others, in that abyss of torments. To the sight of those dreadful apparitions shall be added the horror and fearful darkness of the place. The darkness of Egypt was said to be horrible, because there the Egyptians beheld fearful figures, and fantasms, which terrified them. In the like manner, in that infernal darkness, the eyes shall be tormented with the monstrous figures of the wicked spirits, which shall appear much more dreadful, by reason of the obscurity and sadness of that eternal night.

The hearing shall not only be afflicted by an intolerable pain, caused by that ever-burning and penetrating fire, but also with the fearful and amazing noises of thunders, howlings, clamours, groans,

curses, and blasphemies. Sylla, being dictator, caused six thousand persons to be enclosed in the circus; and then appointing the senate to meet in a temple close by, where he intended to speak unto them about his own affairs, to strike the greater terror into them, and make them know he was their master, he gave order, that, so soon as he began his oration, the soldiers should kill this multitude of people, which was effected: upon which were heard such lamentations, outcries, groans, clashing of armour, and blows of those merciless homicides, that the senators could not hear a word, but stood amazed with terror of so horrid a fact. What shall be the harmony of hell, where the ears shall be deafened with the cries and complaints of the damned! What confusion and horror shall it breed, to hear all lament, all complain, all curse and blaspheme, through the bitterness of the torments which they suffer!

But the damned shall principally be affrighted, and shall quake, to hear the thunder-clap of the wrath of God, which shall continually resound in their ears! "Whereas the just," saith the royal prophet, "shall be in the eternal memory of God, and shall not fear the dreadful crack of his wrath."

The smell shall also be tormented with a most pestilential stink. Horrible was that torment used by Mezentius, to tie a living body to a dead, and there to leave them, until the infection and putrified exhalations of the dead had killed the living. What can be more abominable, than for a living man to have his mouth laid close to that of a dead one, full of grubs and worms, where the living must receive all those pestilential vapours, breathed forth from a corrupt carcass, and suffer such loathsomeness and abominable stink? But what is this in respect of hell, when each body of the damned is more loathsome and unsavoury than a million of dead dogs, and all those pressed and crowded together in so strait a compass? Bonaventure goes so far as to say, that if one only of the damned were brought into this world, it were sufficient to infect the whole earth. Neither shall the devils send forth a better smell; for although they are spirits, yet those fiery bodies, unto which they are fastened and confined, shall be of a more pestilential savour.

Hell is the world's sink, and the receptacle of all the filth in this great frame, and withal a deep dungeon, where the air hath no access. How great must the stink and infection needs be of so many corruptions heaped one upon another! and how insufferable the smell of that infernal brimstone, mixed with so many corrupted matters! O gulf of horror! O infernal grave! without vent or breathing place! Eternal grave of such as die continually and cannot die, with what abominable filth art thou not filled!

What shall I then say of the tongue, which is the instrument of so many ways of sinning, flattery, lying, murmuring, and calumniating, gluttony, and drunkenness. Who can express that bitterness, which the damned shall suffer, greater than that of aloes or wormwood? The Scripture tells us, the gall of dragons shall be their wine; and they shall taste the poison of asps for all eternity, unto which shall be joined an intolerable thirst, and dog-like hunger: conformable to which David said, "they shall suffer hunger as dogs." Famine is the most pressing of all necessities, and most deformed of all evils; plagues and wars are happinesses in respect of it. If, then, a famine of eight days be the worst of temporal evils, what shall that famine be which is eternal? Let our epicures hear what the Son of God prophesies: "Woe unto you who are full;"[a] for you shall be an hungred, and with such an hunger as shall be eternal. Hunger in this life doth bring men to such extremity, that not only they come to desire to eat dogs, cats, rats, and mice, but also mothers come to eat their own children, and men the flesh of their own arms, as it fell out to Zeno the emperor. If hunger be so terrible a mischief in this life, how will it afflict the damned in the other! Without all doubt, the damned would rather tear themselves in pieces than suffer it; all the most horrible famines that Scripture histories propose unto us, are but weak pictures to that which the damned suffer in this unfortunate residence of eternal miseries; neither shall thirst torment them less.

The sense of touching, as it is the most extended sense of all the rest, so it shall be the most tormented in that burning fire; all the torments which the Scripture doth exhibit to us, as prepared for the reprobate, seem to fall upon this only sense: "They shall pass," saith Job, "from extremity of cold to intolerable heats," whole floods of fire and brimstone, which shower down upon those unfortunate wretches; all this belongs unto the sense of touching. We are amazed to think of the inhumanity of Phalaris, who roasted men alive in his brazen bull: this was a joy in respect of that fire of hell, which penetrates the very entrails of the body without consuming them. The burning of a finger only does cause so great a torment, that it is insufferable; but far greater were it to burn the whole arm; and far greater were it, besides the arms, to burn the legs; and far more violent torment would it be to burn the whole body. This torment is so great that it cannot be expressed, since it comprises as many torments as the body of man hath joints, sinews, arteries, &c.; and especially being caused by that penetrating and real fire, of which this temporal fire is but a painted fire in respect of that in hell.

Amongst all the torments which human justice hath invented for the punishment of crimes, there is none held more rigorous than that of fire, by reason of the great activity of that element. What shall the heat of that fire be, which shall be the executioner of the justice of the God of vengeance! whose zeal shall be inflamed against the wicked, and shall kindle the fire, which shall eternally burn in the extremities of hell! Such are the torments and miseries of hell, that if all the trees in the world were put in one heap, and set on fire, I would rather burn there till the day of judgment, than suffer, only for the space of one hour, that fire of hell. What a miserable unhappiness will it be, to burn in those

[a] Luke vi.

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flames of hell, not only for an hour, but till the day of judgment! yea, even for all eternity, and world without end! Who would not esteem it a hideous torment, if he were to be burnt alive a hundred times, and his torment was to last every time for the space of an hour? with what compassionate eyes would all the world look upon such a miserable wretch! Nevertheless, without all doubt, any of the damned in hell would receive this as a great happiness to end his torments with those hundred times burning: for what comparison is there betwixt a hundred hours burning, with some space of time betwixt every hour, and to burn a hundred years of continual torment? And what comparison will there be betwixt burning for a hundred years' space, and to be burning without interruption, as long as God is God?

Who can express the strange and horrible confusion which shall inhabit the appetite of these wretched creatures? If all the disorders of man's life spring from his passions, what disorder must those miserable souls needs feel in that part, what convulsions, what rage, what fury! Alas! that noble passion, love, the queen of all the rest, the sun of life, that passion which might have made them happy for ever, if they had turned it towards God; that amiable object being razed out of them, the perpetual aversion they have to love shall eternally afflict them, the passion of hatred shall be outrageous in the damned, whence shall proceed their continual blasphemies against God, and the perpetual curses and imprecations which they shall make against the creatures; and if they have any desires, they shall be desirous to see all the world partaker of their pains; their aversion from all good shall be as much tormenting, as in itself it is execrable: of joy there must no mention be made in that place of dolour; but contrariwise of incredible sadness, which shall oppress them without any consolation. The heat of anger shall redouble the heat of their flames: hope banished from their hearts shall leave the place void to despair, which shall be one of their fiercest tormentors. And though their bodies be within hell's bosom, yet shall they bear about them another hell in their own bosoms.

Consider now, my soul, whether thou art able to live in this devouring fire, whether thou wilt make choice of thy habitation in eternal flames. This fire is prepared for the devil and his angels; consider whether thou wilt enter into this cursed crew, and take part of the dregs of their chalice. There is no medium; either thou must forsake thy sins, or else thou must be given up a prey to this eternal torment. I doubt not, thou wilt make a happy choice; and, to escape so dangerous a gulf, cast thyself into the arms of Divine mercy, which only admits the penitent, and say thus: "O great God, who art a consuming fire, and makest the fire of thy Divine justice issue from amongst the thorns, to burn the tallest cedars in Lebanon; let the fire, which walks before thee as executioner of thy justice, never depart from our memory; may it be unto us a pillar of light in the darkness of our errors, a lamp unto our feet, and a lantern to our ways, whereby we may discover this infernal gulf, which is ready to swallow us up. Thou, O Lord, who didst deliver the three children out of the Babylonian furnace, preserve us from those eternal flames, and exempt us from the burning ones of thy wrath; place us in the light and bright one of thy love, where, like Pyratides and sacred Salamanders, we shall live happy, without pain or torment, singing honour, praise, and benediction unto thee, our God, for ever and ever. Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pains of the Powers of a damned Soul.

THE imagination shall afflict those miserable offenders, increasing the pains of the senses by the liveliness of its apprehension: if, in this life, the imagination is sometimes so vehement, that it hurts more than real evils; in the other, the torment which it causes will be excessive. Baptista Fulgosus recounts, as an eye-witness, that being a judge in a duel, one of the competitors made the other fly, but instantly fell down dead himself, without any other cause than an imagination that he was hurt to death; for he neither received wound or blow, neither was the sign of any found upon his dead body. If, in this life, the imagination be so powerful in men who are in health, as to cause a sense of pain, where none hurts; grief, where none molests; and death, where none kills; what shall it be in hell, where so many devils punish and afflict with torments, preserving only life, that the pain of death may live eternally? And if we see some timorous people with an imaginary fear tremble and remain half dead, there is no doubt but the imagination of those miserable persons, joined with the horror of the place where they are, will cause a thousand pains and torments.

Frame a judgment of it, by that which happens to such, as in this life, finding themselves guilty of grievous crimes, fear to fall into temporal justice: they may indeed sometimes be in a secure place, but never in security; they may be hid from the eyes of men, and be placed out of their reach; but never shall they be able to hide themselves from themselves, or escape the assault of their own consciences. While they wake, they are tortured with fears and suspicions; their sleep is interrupted with wicked dreams; dread doth still follow them; at each one's approach they quake with fear, and the furies, having seized upon them, grant them neither peace nor truce; their troubled thoughts put their hearts upon the rack. Now, if the apprehension of human justice, which hath power only over the body, gives so dreadful alarms to the imagination, what will the sense of the darts of the Divine justice do, which are so many instruments of death, and burning arrows shot at the damned souls?

The will shall be tormented with an eternal ab-

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horring and rage against itself, against all creatures, and against God, the Creator of all; and shall, with an intolerable sadness, anger, grief, and disorder of all the affections, violently desire things impossible, and despair of all that is good. If joy consists in the possession of what one loves, and pain in the want of that which is desired, and being necessitated to what is abhorred; what greater pain and torment, than to be ever desiring that which shall never be enjoyed, and ever abhorring that which we can never be quit of? That which he desires, he shall never obtain, and what he desires not, eternally suffer; and from hence shall spring that raging fury which David speaks of: "The sinner shall see, and be raging; he shall gnash his teeth, and be consumed." This rage and madness shall be increased by the despair, which shall be joined unto it, which must needs be most terrible unto the damned; for as the greatest evil is eased by hope, so the least is made grievous by despair. Hope in afflictions is supported by two things; one is, the fruit which may result from suffering; the other is, the end and conclusion of the evil suffered: but in regard the despair of the damned is of so great evils, the despair itself will be a most horrible one.

If one suffers and reaps fruit by it, it is a comfort unto him, and the grief is recompensed by the joy of the benefit thereof; but when the suffering is without fruit or profit, then it comes to be heavy indeed: the hope of a good harvest makes the labourer with cheerfulness endure the toil of ploughing and sowing; but if he were certain to reap no profit, every pace he moved would be grievous and irksome unto him. Though in temporal afflictions this hope of recompence should fail, yet the hope that they should sometimes cease and have an end, would afford some comfort and ease unto the sufferers: but in hell both those are wanting; the damned shall never receive reward for their sufferings, nor shall their torments ever have an end.

O let us consider how great a recompence attends the least of our sufferings here in God's service; and how vain and unprofitable shall all our sufferings be hereafter: here some few penitent ejaculations may gain eternal glories; there the most intense pains and torments, both in soul and body, cannot deserve a drop of cold water, nor so much ease as to turn from one side to the other. In this raging despair end the vain hopes of sinners: hell is full of those who hoped they should never enter into it, and full of those who despair of getting out of it; they offended with a presumptuous hope they should not die in sin, and that proving false, are fallen into eternal desperation; there is no hope can excuse the falling into so great a danger. Let us therefore secure heaven, and not sin.

The memory shall be another cruel tormentor of those miserable sinners, converting all they have done, good or bad, into torments: the good, because they have lost their reward; the bad, because they have deserved their punishment: the delights also which they have enjoyed, and all the happiness of this life, in which they have triumphed, (seeing that for them they fell into this misery,) shall be a sharp sword which shall pierce their hearts; they shall be full of affliction, when they shall compare the shortness of their past pleasures with the eternity of their present torments. What groans, what sighs, will they pour out, when they see that those delights, which hardly lasted an instant, and that the pains they suffer for them, shall last for ages and eternities; all that is past appearing but as a dream. Let us tremble at the pleasures and felicity of this life, since they may turn into arsenic or wormwood. The miserable wretch shall, with great grief, remember, how often he might have gained heaven, and did not, but is now tumbled into hell; and shall say unto himself, "How many times might I have prayed, and spent that time in play! but now I pay for it. How many times ought I to have fasted, and left it, to satisfy my greedy appetite! How many times might I have given alms, and spent it in sin! How many times might I have pardoned my enemies, and chose rather to be revenged! How many times might I have frequented the sacraments, and forbore them, because I would not quit the occasion of sinning! There never wanted means of serving God; but I never made use of them, and am, therefore, justly paid for all. Behold, wretched soul, that, entertaining thyself in pleasures, thou hast for toys and fooleries lost heaven. If thou wouldst, thou mightest have been a companion for angels; if thou wouldst, thou mightest have been in eternal joy, and thou hast left all for the pleasure of a moment. 'O accursed and miserable creature, thy Redeemer courted thee with heaven, and thou despisedst him for a base trifle. This was thy fault, and now thou sufferest for it; and since thou wouldst not be happy with God, thou shalt now be eternally cursed by him and his angels.'"

The understanding shall torment itself with discourses of great bitterness, discoursing of nothing but what may grieve it. Aristotle shall not then take delight in his wisdom, nor Seneca comfort himself with his philosophy; Galen shall find no remedy in his physic, nor the profoundest scholar in his divinity.

Besides these miseries and calamities, in this power of the soul is engendered the worm of conscience; which is so often proposed unto us in holy Scripture, as a most terrible torment, and greater than that of fire. Only in one sermon, Christ, our Redeemer, three times menaces us "with that worm which gnaws the consciences, and tears in pieces the hearts of the damned;" admonishing us often, "that their worm shall never die, nor their fire be quenched." For as the worm which breeds in dead flesh, or that which breeds in woods, eats and gnaws that substance of which they are engendered; so the worm which is bred from sin, is in perpetual enmity with it, gnawing and devouring the heart of the sinner, with raging and desperate grief; still putting him in mind, that, by his own fault, he lost that eternal glory, which he might so easily have obtained, and is now fallen into eternal torments, from whence there is no redemption. And, certainly, this resentment of the loss of heaven shall

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more torment him than the fire of hell; it is a hell in hell, worse than a thousand hells.

Certainly it were a great rigour, if a father should be forced to be present at the execution of his son; but more, if he should be compelled to be the hangman; and yet greater if the gallows should be placed before his own door, so that he could neither go in nor out without beholding the affront: but far greater cruelty, if they should make the guilty person to execute himself, and that by cutting his body in pieces, member after member, or tearing off his flesh with his own teeth. This is the cruelty and torment of an evil conscience, with which a sinner is racked and tortured amongst those eternal flames, not being able to banish his faults from his memory, nor their punishment from his thoughts: the envy, also, which they shall bear towards those who have gained heaven, by as small matters as they have lost it, shall much add to their grief. Those who are hungry, if they see others, meaner than they, feed at some splendid and plentiful table, and cannot be admitted themselves, become more hungry; so shall it fare with the damned, who shall be more afflicted by beholding others, sometime less than themselves, enjoy that eternal happiness, which they, through want of care, are deprived of. What lamentations shall the damned send forth, when they shall see that the just have gained the benediction of God, and that they lost it through their own neglect!

After all this, there shall not want in hell the pains of death, which amongst human punishments is the greatest; that of hell is a living death. The death which men give, together with death, takes away the pain and sense of dying; but the eternal death of sinners is with sense; and by so much greater, as it hath more of life, recollecting within itself the worst of dying, which is to perish; and the most intolerable of life, which is to suffer pain. In hell there shall be, unto the miserable, a death without death, and an end without end; for their death shall ever live, and their end shall never begin.

See how the rack compels them, at length, to confess the truth. What hath pride profited us? What advantage have we gotten by the vanity of riches? All that is past as a shadow, as a ship sailing on the sea under full sails, leaving behind her no marks of her passage; as a bird flying in the air, whose trace is not found. So have our days run by, without having any mark of virtue; we have spent in malice all the time, which was liberally bestowed upon us, "to work out our salvation in fear and trembling;" we have passed the course of our age in appearances, and in the vanities and follies of the world; and in an instant we are fallen into hell. In this sort do those wretches, gnawn with a continual sorrow, unprofitably repent themselves, and groan under the pressure and affliction of heart, which is the hell of their hell.

Even here, amongst us, if there should be a condition, in which we might be sensible but of some part of that which death brings along with it, it would be esteemed a greater evil than death itself. Who doubts, but if one, after burial, should find himself alive and sensible under the earth, where he could speak with nobody, see nothing but darkness, hear nothing but those who walk above him, smell nothing but the rotten stink of their bodies, eat nothing but his own flesh, nor feel any thing but the earth which oppresses him, or the cold pavement of the vault where he lay; who doubts, I say, but that this estate were worse than to be wholly dead, since life only served to feel the pain of death? What sepulchre is more terrible than that of hell, which is eternally shut upon those who are in it, where the miserable damned remain, not only under the earth, but under fire, having sense for nothing but to feel death, darkness, and pain? This death of hell may be called a double death, in respect it contains both the death of sin and the death of pain; those unfortunate wretches standing condemned, never to be freed from the death of sin, and for ever to be tormented with death of pain. There is no greater death than that of the soul, which is sin; in which the miserable are to continue whilst God is God, with that infinite evil, and that ugly deformity, which sin draws along with it; which is worse than to suffer that eternal fire, which is but the punishment of it. After sin, what pains should there be greater, than that of sin itself? Who trembles not with the only memory, that he is to die, remembering that he is to cease to be; that the feet, whereon he walks, are no more to bear him; that his hands are no more to serve him, nor his eyes to see? Why then do we not tremble at the thought of hell, in respect of which the first death is no punishment, but a reward and happiness; there being no damned in hell, but would take that death, which we here inflict for offences, as an ease of his pains? They shall desire death, and death shall fly from them; for unto all their evils and miseries, this, as the greatest, is adjoined, that neither they nor it shall ever die. This circumstance of being eternal, doth much augment the torments of hell. Let us suppose, that one had but a gnat that should sting his right hand, and a wasp at the left; and that one foot should be pricked with a thorn, and the other with a pin: if this only were to last for ever, it would be an intolerable pain. What will it then be, when hands, feet, arms, head, and all the members, are to burn for all eternity? They shall always burn, but never to be consumed; they shall seek for death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore, justly doth one cry out, "O, woe eternal, that never shall have end! O end without end! O death, more grievous than all death; always to die, and never to be quite dead."

The torments in hell are so many in number, that they cannot be numbered; so long in continuance, that they cannot be measured; so grievous for quality, that they cannot be endured, but with such infinite pain, that every minute of an hour shall seem a whole year. "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy displeasure: unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish." In this life we have hope for our comforter, in all distresses; which hath a sovereign virtue, to mitigate all pains and sorrows. And God, of his great mercy, for the most part, in all adversities,

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still leaveth a man some hope of help and succour. The sick man, as long as he lives, he still lives in hope; as long as there is life, there is hope; but after this life endeth, there remaineth to the damned no more any hope of comfort: hope, the last comforter of all, taketh her flight, and eternal desperation seizeth upon them.

If an angel should promise thee to be made an emperor, so you would lie in your bed one night in the same posture, looking upwards towards heaven, without moving or turning yourself all night; if you have a mind to turn on one side, it will be a trouble to you not to do it, and you will persuade yourself, that you never lay so uneasy in your whole life before; and will say unto yourself, "My bed is good and soft, I am well, what is wanting to me? Nothing is wanting, but only to turn me from one side to the other." How comes this to pass, that thou canst not rest one single night; it being such a torture to be still, without turning thyself? What would it be, if thou wert to remain in one posture three or four nights? Thou hast little patience, since a thing so small doth grieve thee; what would it be, if thou hadst the colic, or wert tormented with the stone or sciatica? Far greater evils than these are prepared for thee in hell, whither thou postest, by running into so many sins. Consider what a couch is prepared for thee in that abyss of misery; what feather-bed; what Holland sheets! Thou shalt be cast upon burning coals, flames and sulphur shall be thy coverlets. Mark well, whether this bed be for one night only. Yea, nights, days, months, and years, for ages and eternities, thou art to remain on that side thou fallest on, without having the least relief to turn thyself unto the other. That fire shall never die, neither shalt thou ever die, to the end its torments may last eternally. After a hundred years, add after a hundred thousand of millions of years, they shall be as lively and as vigorous as at the first day. See what thou dost, by not fearing eternal death; by making no account of eternity; by setting so much of thy affection on a temporal life. Thou dost not walk the right way: change thy life, and begin to serve thy Creator.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee; I send up my sighs, as humble orators before thee. I know not what to ask, nor how; only this one thing I beg at thy hands, that thou wilt not suffer me to die an eternal death. Correct me here as thy child, that I may be saved hereafter. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee; and that I desire to be with thee, that I may sing eternal praises unto thee. Lord, have mercy upon me, and grant me my request, for thy great mercy's sake.

CHAPTER IX.

The Fruit which may be drawn from the Consideration of Eternal Evils.

ALL which hath been said of the pains in hell, is far short of that which really they are. There is great difference betwixt the knowledge we have by relation, and that which we learn by experience. The Maccabees knew, that the temple of the Lord was already profaned and destroyed; they had heard of it, and lamented it. But when they saw with their eyes the sanctuary lie desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burnt, there was then no measure of their tears; they tore their garments, cast ashes upon their heads, threw themselves upon the ground, and their complaints ascended as high as heaven. If, then, the relation and discourse of the pains of hell make us tremble; what shall be sight and experience? The consideration of what hath been said, may help us to form some conception of the terror and horror of that place of eternal sorrow. Let us descend into hell whilst we live, that we may not descend there when we are dead. Let us draw some fruit from thence, during our lives, from whence nothing but torment is to be had after death.

The principal fruit which may be drawn from that consideration, are these. In the first place, an ardent love and sincere gratitude towards our Creator; that having so often deserved hell, he hath not yet suffered us to fall into it. How many be there now in hell, who for their first mortal sin, and only for that one, have been sent thither! and we, notwithstanding the innumerable sins which we have committed, are yet spared. What did God find in us, that he should use a mercy towards us for so many sins, which he did not afford to others for so few? Why are we not then more grateful for so many benefits, which we have no ways deserved? How grateful would a damned person be, if God should free him from those flames, wherein he is tormented, and place him in the same condition we now are! What a life would he lead, and how grateful would he be unto so merciful a Benefactor! He hath done no less for us, but much more; for if he hath not drawn us out of hell, he hath not thrown us into it, as we deserved: which is the greater favour? Tell me, if a creditor should cast that debtor into prison, who owed him a thousand ducats, and after the enduring of much affliction, at last release him; or should suffer another, who owed fifty thousand ducats, to go up and down free, without touching a thread of his garment; whether of the debtors received the greater benefit? I believe thou wilt say, "The latter." More, then, we are indebted to God Almighty; and, therefore, ought to serve him better. Consider how a man would live, who should be restored to life after he had been in hell. Thou shouldst live better, since thou art more indebted to Almighty God.

Secondly: We are taught to exercise our pa-

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tience, in suffering the afflictions and troubles of this life; that, by enduring of these thankfully, we may escape those of the other. He who shall consider the eternity of those torments, which he deserves, will not be troubled at the pains of this life, how bitter soever. There is no state or condition upon earth, how miserable soever, which the damned would not endure, and think it an infinite happiness if they might change with it; neither is there any course of life so unhappy, which he, who had once experienced those burning flames, if he might live again, would not willingly undergo. He, who hath once deserved eternal torments, let him never murmur against the crosses and petty injuries offered him in this life. If thou goest into a bath, and shalt find it excessive hot, think on hell. If thou art tormented with the heat of some violent fever, pass unto the consideration of those eternal flames, which burn without end; and think, that if a bath or calenture so afflict, how shalt thou endure that river of fire? When thou shalt see any thing great in this present life, think presently of the kingdom of heaven, and so thou shalt not value it much; and when thou shalt see any thing terrible, think on hell, and thou wilt not be much moved. When the desire of any temporal thing shall afflict thee, think that the pleasure of it is of no estimation; if the fear of laws, which are enacted here upon earth, be of that force, that they are able to deter us from evil actions; much more ought the thoughts of eternal pain to affright us. If we often think of hell, we shall never fall into it.

We ought often to call to mind the evils of the next life, that we may the more despise the pleasures of this; because temporal felicity uses often to end in eternal misery. All that is precious in this world, honour, wealth, fame, pleasure, all the splendour of the earth, is but a shadow, if we compare the small duration of them with the eternity of those torments in the other world.

Put all the silver in the world together in one heap; all the gold, all the precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, with all other the richest jewels; all the triumphs of the Romans, all the rarities and dainties of the Assyrians, &c. all would deserve to be of no other value than dirt, if to be possessed with hazard of falling at last into the pit of hell. Let us call to mind that sentence of our blessed Saviour: "What will it avail a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his soul?" If they should make us lords and masters, I say, not of great wealth, but of the whole world, we should not admit of it with the least hazard of being damned for ever. Let one enjoy all the contents and regales imaginable; let him be raised to the highest pitch of honour; let him triumph with all the greatness in the world. All this is but a dream, if, after this mortal life, he finds himself at length plunged into hell fire.

You may look upon a wheel of squibs and fireworks, which, whilst it moves, casts forth a thousand lights and splendours, with which the beholders are much taken; but all, at last, ends in a little smoke and burnt paper. So it is, whilst the wheel of felicities was in motion, according to the style of St. James; that is to say, whilst our life lasts, its fortune and prosperity appears most glorious; but ceasing, all comes to end in smoke, and he that fares best in it, at last finds himself plunged into hell.

When a fever, or some great unexpected change in a man's estate, happens to him, it makes him to forget all his former contents in health and wealth; his sickness and adversity so taking up the whole man, as that he hath no leisure to employ his thoughts upon any thing else; and if, perhaps, any passage of his former condition chance to come to his mind, it gives him no satisfaction, but rather augments his pain; wherefore if temporal evils, though very short, are sufficient to make former felicities of many years vanish; what impression will temporal goods make in us, if we employ our thoughts upon eternal evils? Besides, those torments, which are to be suffered hereafter without profit, may move in us to husband the short time of this life most to our advantage. How many miserable souls now suffer those eternal pains, for not employing one day in the service of God! What would a damned soul give for one quarter of an hour out of so many days and years which are lost, and shall not have one instant allowed him? Thou, who now livest and hast time, lose not that which imports thee so much, and once lost can never be recovered. O miserable creatures! who, for having lost a short space of time, lose an eternity of felicity; they come to know too late the importance of that which they have lost, and shall never come to regain it; let us now make use of that time, whilst we may gain eternity, and let us not lose that with pleasure, which cannot be recovered with grief.

Lastly, let us draw, from the consideration of hell, a perfect hatred to all mortal sin, since from the evil of sin proceeds that evil of pain: terrible is the evil of sin, since it cannot be satisfied even with eternal flames.

CHAPTER X.

The Infinite Guilt of Mortal Sin, by which we lose the Felicity of Heaven, and fall into Eternal Evils.

So foul and horrid is a mortal sin in its own nature, that though it passed only in thought, and none knew it but God, and he who committed it, and which endured no longer than an instant, yet it deserves the torments of hell for all eternity; for by how much greater is the majesty of God, which is despised, by so much greater is the injury offered him; and therefore as the majesty of God, which is despised by sin, is infinite, so the despite of it must contain, in itself, a certain kind of infinity: by how much greater is the reverence due to a person, by so much greater is the disrespect and affront

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offered him. And as to God there is due an infinite reverence, so the injury done him is of an inexplicable malice, which by no good works of a mere creature, how many and great soever, can be expiated. So great is the malignity of a mortal sin, that, being put into the balance of Divine justice, it would outweigh all the good works of all the saints, although they were a thousand times more and greater than they are; because the good works with which God is honoured by his saints, although in themselves great in value, yet in respect of God, unto whom they add nothing, and who is nothing bettered by them, they are not valuable; unto whose divine goodness, not only they, but infinitely more, and greater, are but a debt: but for God to be despised by his creature, who, by infinite titles, is obliged to serve him, and ought to reverence him with an infinite honour, is a thing so highly repugnant to his majesty, that, if God were capable of grief, it would more afflict him than all the pious actions of the saints content him: certainly, amongst men, the honour which is given to one who deserves it, takes not so much, as a contempt done unto him who merits it not: a king values not much the honour which is given him by his vassals, because he takes it not for a courtesy, but a duty; but to be affronted and scorned by one, especially whom he had favoured with his benefits, sticks near unto his heart; for not only kings, but all men, think honour due unto them, and disrespect an injury. There is no resentment among men so quick as that of dishonour; nor any thing which causes more grief and vexation. If some person of quality should have his hat plucked off from his head in scorn, and receive a dozen of bastinadoes from some base fellow, that affront would not be recompensed, although a thousand should put off their caps to him, and kiss his hand.

By this may appear the irreverence and great incivility towards God in a mortal sin: insomuch as St. Paul calls it "kicking, or spurning, the Son of God;" this is the reason why it was necessary that God should become man, being the Divine justice could not be appeased with less than the satisfaction of a Divine person: let those, therefore, cease to marvel, that a momentary sin should be punished with eternal torments, who see that, for sin, God was made man, and died for man; and certainly, it is a far greater wonder, that God should die for the sin of another, than that man should, for his own sin, suffer an eternal punishment: and if the malice of sin be so exorbitant, that nothing could satisfy for it less than God; it is nothing strange, that that which hath no limit, nor bound in evil, should have no limit in punishment, but should exceed all time, and be eternal. And if a treason committed against a temporal prince be chastised with loss of life and goods of the traitor, and with the punishment also of his posterity, which, inasmuch as concerns the prince, is eternal; why should not the offence of a vile worm, against his Creator, be tormented with eternal pains? The greatness of honour decreases and grows less, according to the height and dignity of the person honoured; so as that honour which, done to an ordinary person, would seem excessive, given unto a prince is nothing: and on the contrary, the greatness of an injury rises and grows higher, according to the worth of him who is injured; so as God, who is infinite, being the person offended, deserves that the injury done unto him should be chastised with a punishment equal to the duration of his being, and needs that he, who satisfies for it, should be a person of infinite worth and perfection, voluntarily undertaking to put himself into the sinner's place, and to suffer in his stead.

And as sin is grievous in its own nature, so it is much engreatened by the circumstances which attend it: let us consider who it is that sins; it is a most vile and wretched man, who presumes to lift up his hands against his Creator: and what is man but a vessel of dung, a stink of corruption, and, by birth, a slave of the devil? and yet he dares offend his Maker. An offence against God were more grievous, though from another god (if it were possible) infinite and equal to himself; but that this creature should be so insolent against his omnipotent Lord, is beyond amazement. But what is that which a sinner does, when he offends? It is, according to St. Anselm, an endeavour to pluck the crown from the head of God, and place it upon his own; it is, according to the apostle, to "crucify again the Lord of life." If any of these things were attempted against a majesty upon earth, it were enough to make the offender's flesh to be plucked off with pincers, to have him torn in pieces with wild horses, to pull down his house, and sow the place with salt, and make his whole lineage infamous. If such an offence were committed by one man against another; betwixt whom the difference is not great, being both equal in nature, it were very heinous; what shall it deserve, being committed against God, the Lord and Creator of all, whose immense greatness is infinitely distant from the nature of his creature? O good God! who is able to express what a sinner doth against thee and himself? He despises thy majesty, razes out thy law from his heart, contemns thy justice, scorns thy threats, despises thy promises, makes a solemn renunciation of thy glory, thou hast promised him; and all to bind himself an eternal slave to Satan, desiring rather to please thine enemy than thee, who art his Father, his Friend, and all his good, desiring rather to die eternally, by displeasing thee, than to enjoy heaven for ever, by serving thee.

Let us now see where, and in what place, a sinner presumes to sin, and be a traitor unto God; it is even in his own world, in his own house; and knowing that his Creator looks upon him, he offends him: if a sin were committed where God could not see it, it were yet an enormous fault; but to do an injury to his Creator, before his face, what an unspeakable impudence is it! If he who sins could go into another world, where God did not inhabit, and there, in secret under the earth, should sin after such a manner, as only himself should know it, yet it were a great boldness; but to sin in his own house, which is this world, what hell doth it not deserve? For a man only to lay his hand upon his sword, in the palace

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of a king, is capital, and deserves death. For a sinner then, by his sins, to spurn and crucify the Son of God, in the house of his Father, and before his face, what understanding can conceive the greatness of such a malice? And therefore David, with reason, dissolved himself into tears, because he had sinned in the presence of God, and with a grief which pierced his heart, cried out, "I have done evil before thee." Besides this, we not only sin against God in his own house, but even in his arms, whilst we are upheld by his omnipotence: if there were a son so wicked, who, whilst he was cherished in his mother's bosom, should strike her, and endeavour to kill her, every one would think that a most impious child: how, then, dares man offend God, who sustains, preserves, and hath redeemed him?

The heinousness of this malice in sin is much augmented, by the helps which a sinner uses to effect it; for he turns those very divine benefits, which he hath received from God, against him who gave them. The sense which men usually have of ingratitude, is most apprehensive; if to forget a benefit be ingratitude, to despise it is an injury; but to use it against the benefactor, I know not what to call it: this does he who sins, making use of those creatures, which God created for his service, to offend him; and converts his divine benefits into arms against God himself! What could we say, if a king, to honour his soldier, should make him a knight, arm him with his own arms, should gird his sword about him with his own hands, and that the soldier, so soon as he was possessed of the sword, should draw it against the king, and murder him? This wickedness, which seems impossible amongst men, is ordinary in man towards God; who, being honoured so many ways by his Creator, and enriched with so many benefits, as much as in him lies bereaves God of his honour, and desires to bereave him of his life: his understanding, which he received from God, he uses in finding out a way to execute his sin; with his hands he performs it, and, with all his power, offends him who gave them.

But if we shall consider why man does this, it is a circumstance which will amaze us at the malice of it. Why doth a sinner thus offend against his God? Wherefore does he despise his Creator? Wherefore is he a traitor unto the Lord of the world? Wherefore doth he abhor his Redeemer? What reason hath he for so monstrous a wickedness? It is only for a base and filthy pleasure, for a foolish fancy of man, because he will, and no more. O horrid insolence! O mad fury of men, which, without a cause, so grievously offend their Creator; and, by their sins, provoke so good and gracious a God!

The manner also of our sinning would astonish any who should seriously consider it; it is with so much impudence, pride, and contempt of God, after having heard so many examples of his chastisements executed upon sinners, after having seen that the most beautiful and glorious of all the angels, and, with him, innumerable others, were thrown from heaven, and made fire-brands in hell, for one sin, and that only in thought; after having seen the first man, for one sin, banished from the Paradise of pleasure, into this valley of tears, despoiled of so many supernatural endowments, and condemned to death; after having known that so many have been damned for their offences; after that the Son of God had suffered upon the cross for our sins; after all this, to sin is an impudence never heard of, and an intolerable contempt of the Divine justice.

Besides, what greater scorn and contempt of God than this; that God, who is worthy of all honour and love, and the devil, who is our professed enemy, pretending both to our souls, the one to save them, the other to torment them in eternal flames, yet we adhere to Satan, and prefer him before Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer; and that so much to our prejudice, as by the loss of eternal glory, and captivating ourselves unto eternal torments and slavery! The manner also of sinning aggravates the sin, as the sinner doth, by losing thereby eternal happiness; though he who sins much, lost nothing, yet the offence against God were great; but well knowing the great damages and punishments likewise that attend sin, and the evident hazard he runs, and yet to sin, is a strange impudence. If we shall consider when it is that we sin, we shall find this circumstance no less to aggravate our offences than the former: because we now sin, when we know that the Son of God was nailed unto the cross that we should not sin; when we know that God was incarnate for us, humbled himself to be made man, and subjected himself unto death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption: to sin after we had seen God so good and obliging unto us, with those not to be imagined favours, is a circumstance which ought much to be pondered in our hearts, and might make us forbear the offending of so loving a Father. And that christian, who sins after all this, is to be esteemed worse than a devil; for the devil never sinned against that God, who had shed his blood for him, or who had pardoned so much as one sin of his. When those sinned who were under the law of nature, they had not seen the Son of God die for their salvation, as a christian hath; and there is no doubt but christians will deserve new torments, and greater than those who have not had the knowledge of God, nor received so many benefits from him.

Let us consider about what sin is committed, and we do offend God. It is about complying with a sensual gust, which, in the end, bereaves us of health, of honour, of substance, and even of pleasure itself; suffering many days of grief for a moment of delight; about things of the earth, which are vile and transitory; and about goods of the world, which are false, short, and deceitful. What would we say, if, for a thing of so small value as a straw, one man should kill another? No more than a straw are all the felicities of the world, in respect of those of heaven; and for a thing of so small consideration, we are traitors to God, and crucify Christ again; and that a thousand times, as often as we sin mortally against him.

Lastly: consider whom we offend; it is God,

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who is most perfect, most wise, immense, omnipotent, and infinite. We sin against him who infinitely loves us, who suffers us, who heaps his benefits and rewards upon us; to do evil to those who make much of them, even wild beasts abhor it; what is it then for thee to injure him, who loved thee more than himself; who hath done thee all good, that thou shouldst do no evil? Fear then this Lord, reverence his majesty, love his goodness, and offend him no more. Sin is so evil, that it is every way evil; behold it on every side, it still seems worse. It is not only evil, as it is an injury to God, but it is evil in itself, in its own nature; for if there were no God, or that God were not offended with it, yet it were a most horrid evil, the greatest of all evils, and the cause of all evils. In regard of this deformity and filthiness of sin, the philosophers judged it to be abhorred above all things, and those who denied the immortality of the soul, and the providence of God, affirmed that nothing should make them commit it; and there have been some amongst them who have suffered great extremities, to avoid a vicious act: Damocles, as Plutarch writes, chose rather to be boiled in scalding water than to consent to a filthy act; for which reason is Hippo celebrated amongst the Greek matrons, who chose rather to die than offend. These were gentiles, who saw not hell open for the punishment of sinners, nor fled from sin, because it was an offence unto God, but only for the enormity and filthiness it had in itself: this made them endure prisons and tortures, rather than admit it. What should christians then do, who know how much sin is offensive to God? Certainly they ought rather to give a thousand lives, than once to injure their Creator by committing an offence, which not only gentiles, but even nature, hath in horror, which hath planted in brute beasts, although they cannot sin, yet a natural aversion from that which looks like sin.

Pliny admires the force of lightning, which melts the gold and silver, and leaves the purse which contains it untouched: such is sin, which kills the soul, and leaves the body sound and active; it is a flash of lightning sent from hell, and such leaves the soul which it hath blasted.

Sin, though it were the best thing of the world, yet, for the evil effects it produces, it ought to be avoided more than death; it bereaves the soul of grace, banishes the Holy Ghost, deprives it of the right of heaven; makes him unworthy of Divine protection, and condemns a sinner unto eternal torments in the other world, and in this to many disasters; for there is neither plague, war, famine, nor infirmity of body, whereof sin hath not been in some sort the occasion. And therefore those who weep for their afflictions, let them change the object of their tears, and weep for the cause, which is their sin.

I will therefore from henceforth resolve, that although I were certain that men should not know my sins, and that God would pardon them; yet I will not offend for the very filthiness of sin.

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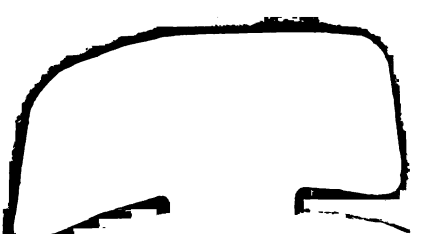

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